

# **Horizon**

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

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**BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT**

*by DYLAN THOMAS*

**JUNE 23rd**

*by MASS-OBSERVATION*

**WAR SYMPOSIUM:**

**(iv) THE WALL**

*by WILLIAM SANSOM*

**THE ARTISTIC VISION OF PROUST**

*by R. IRONSIDE*

**J. M. BARRIE**

*by HUGH KINGSMILL*

**THE HUMAN HOUSE**

*by ROGER ROUGHTON*

**THE THEORY OF JUSTICE**

*by CATHERINE ANDRASSY*

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# HORIZON

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KEW GARDENS, 1940

Eric Gurney Friston

## COMMENT

CAN we have an English Renaissance? Elizabethan England began one, Caroline England continued it, Augustan England completed it: our romantic writers from 1780 to 1840 led the world. It is only since about nineteen hundred that, as a creative country, we have gone off the boil. Freud, Einstein, Proust, Picasso, Stravinsky, Corbusier and so on, are names to which we cannot supply equals from this country. Lawrence, alone of English literary figures of the last thirty years, is capable of inflaming the world as have those vigorous but imperfect artists, Byron, Shaw and Wilde; for Lawrence alone possesses the requisite halo of anglophobia and persecution.

It would not be unfair to say that the England of Baldwin, MacDonald and Chamberlain was a decadent country—‘Cabbage Land’, ‘Land of lobelias and tennis flannels’, ‘This England where nobody is well’—its gods were wealth and sport; from any unpleasant decision it flinched in disgust; though assailed by critics from the right and left, it still wallowed supinely in a scented bath of stocks and shares, race-cards and roses, while the persecuted, who believed in the great English traditions of the nineteenth century, knocked in vain at the door.

Since Dunkirk we have seen the end of the political and military decadence of England. Whatever residue of complacency, sloth and inefficiency there may be left, England is now a great power, and able to stand for something in the world again. When the war is over we shall live in an Anglo-American world. There will be other great powers, but the sanctions on which the West reposes will be the ideas for which England and America have fought and won, and the machines behind them. We had all this in 1918 and made a failure of it. The ideas expired in the impotence of Geneva. The machines spouted Ford cars, Lucky Strike, Mary Pickford and Coca-Cola. The new masters of the world created Le Touquet and Juan les Pins, fought each other for oil and reparations, blamed each other for the slump, and wandered blandly and ignorantly over Europe with a dark blue suit, letter of credit, set of clean teeth and stiff white collar. Fascism arose as a religion of disappointment, a spreading nausea at the hypocrisy of the owners of the twentieth century. It is important to see that

Fascism is a disease, as catching as influenza; we all when tired and disillusioned have Fascist moments, when belief in human nature vanishes, when we burn with anger and envy like the underdog and the sucker, when we hate the virtuous and despise the weak, when we feel as Goebbels permanently feels, that all fine sentiment is bally-hoo, that we are the dupes of our leaders, and that the masses are evil, to be resisted with the cruelty born of fear. This is the theological sin of despair, a Haw-Haw moment which quickly passes, but which Fascism has made permanent, and built up into a philosophy. In every human being there is a Lear and a fool, a hero and a clown, who comes on the stage and burlesques his master. He should never be censored, but neither should he be allowed to rule. In the long run all that Fascism guarantees is a Way of Death; it criticizes the easy life by offering a noisy way of killing and dying. The key philosophies which the world will need after the war are, therefore, those which believe in life, which assert the goodness and sanity of man, and yet which will never allow those virtues to run to seed and engender their opposites again.

The greatest discovery we can make from this war, the one without which no Renaissance is possible, is what human beings are really like; what is good for them, what standard of living, what blend of freedom and responsibility, what mixture of courage and intelligence, heart and head makes for progress and happiness. We find out what we need by having to do without what we think we need. All words and ideas must be tested and built up again from experience. Thus it is clear that a chaotic situation in human affairs has been caused by the word Liberty. Liberty is not an end in itself; complete liberty makes men miserable; liberty is only valuable as providing the space in which human dignity can develop, and it is human dignity which more than anything else is vilified by totalitarian states. When we have learnt what kind of life we want, what kind of man should live it, a Renaissance becomes possible. Here are some conditions for it.

An artistic Renaissance can only take place where there is a common attitude to life, a new and universal movement. By the time Anglo-American war aims have crystallized from the philosophy behind them, this should be in existence. But no political movement can have the art it deserves until it has learnt

to respect the artist. The English mistrust of the intellectual, the brutish æsthetic apathy and contempt for the creative artist must go. Bred of the intolerance of public schoolboys, the infectious illiteracy of the once appreciative gentry, the money grubbing of the Victorian industrialists and the boorishness of the Hanoverian court, our Philistinism, which also expresses the English lack of imagination and fear of life, should be made a criminal offence. There can be no dignity of man without respect for the humanities.

A Renaissance also requires a belief in spiritual values, for materialism distils nothing but a little rare dandyism, an occasional Watteau, and that will not be enough. The most sensible cure for materialism is a surfeit of it, which post-war science and economics should assure us. Yet we cannot get such a spiritual revival until the religious forces and the spiritual humanistic forces come to terms together, as did the Basque priests and the Spanish Republicans, or Bernanos and the French Left. This is the hardest bridge to erect, but it will have to be done, and should not be impossible; for our civilization is impregnated with Christianity even where it seems unchristian; the foundations of our beliefs are those of Christianity and Greece whatever those beliefs may have become.

Regionalism, after the War, must come into its own. There is already a Welsh Renaissance in being; there is activity in Ireland and Scotland. Regionalism is the remedy for provincialism. Only by decentralizing can we avoid that process which ends by confining all art to the capital, and so giving it an urban outlook. England is one of those mysterious geographical entities where great art has flourished. We have the racial mixture, the uneven climate, the European tradition, the deep deserted mineshaft. We must reopen the vein.

The greatest danger, let us hope, to the artist in the England of the future will be his success. He will live through the nightmare to see the new golden age of the west, a world in which no one will be unwanted again, in which the artist will always be in danger of dissipating himself in the service of the State, in broadcasts or lecture tours, in propaganda and pamphlets. As in ancient Rome or China, or modern Russia or U.S.A., the artist will have a sense of responsibility to a world-wide audience, which he must control. But that should be the only temptation for him in what

will at last be a serious world, a world in which the new conquerors avoid the mistakes of the old and bring to the opportunites of victory the wisdom and dignity that is learnt in defeat. We must never go back to Monkey Hill, to the Tiger of Fascism, or the Ape of Pluto-Democracy, but move through the new Europe like elephants, wise, farseeing, stoical and dignified—the elephant, according to Buffon, is the only animal to feel Ambition. We might add that he preserves his individuality though he lives in the herd, combines adaptability to the future with a sense of the past, while his honour and generosity are, like his memory, proverbial, and his trunk, which can fell a tree or thread a needle, is the most delicate of nature's instruments. Ambition we certainly need in England in our new hay-scented Elephant Order

ou tout ce que l'on aime est digne d'être aimé,  
and Lucidity, Humanity, Imagination, as well.

#### ABOUT THIS NUMBER

R. Ironside, whose first long essay, *Burne-Jones and Moreau*, appeared in *Horizon*, is at the Tate Gallery. Roger Roughton, a young Communist, who edited *Contemporary Poetry and Prose*, committed suicide in Dublin last April, aged twenty-four. *The Human House* was finished shortly before he died. *The Theory of Justice* was written before the entry of Russia into the war, and Catherine Andrassy feels that in the altered circumstances some of her expressions are rather strong. They relate, however, to that central problem of Ends v. Means, which must be settled by Stalinites and Liberals if the split in the Left is ever to be healed and a new popular front emerge from the war.

Gregorio Prieto was born at Valdepenas in La Mancha. Since 1935 he has lived in England and has published two books of drawings, 'An English Garden' and 'Students: Oxford and Cambridge'. He is now preparing a book of studies of English life, and another called 'The Portrait', and also illustrations to the Sonnets of Shakespeare.

'Kew Gardens' is from the recent exhibition of some of his drawings and paintings at Oxford.

The travelling exhibition of Town Planning reviewed in the June number by Erno Goldfinger was organized for the 1940 Council by Ralph Tubbs.

DYLAN THOMAS

# BALLAD OF THE LONG- LEGGED BAIT

The bows glided down, and the coast  
Blackened with birds took a last look  
At his thrashing hair and whale-blue  
eye;  
The trodden town rang its cobbles for  
luck.

Then goodbye to the fishermanned  
Boat with its anchor free and fast  
As a bird hooking over the sea,  
High and dry by the top of the mast,

Whispered the affectionate sand  
And the bulwarks of the dazzled quay.  
For my sake sail, and never look back,  
Said the looking land.

Sails drank the wind, and white as  
milk

He sped into the drinking dark;  
The sun shipwrecked west on a pearl  
And the moon swam out of its hulk,

Funnels and masts went by in a whirl.  
Goodbye to the man on the sea-  
legged deck  
To the gold gut that sings on his reel  
To the bait that stalked out of the  
sack,

For we saw him throw to the swift  
flood  
A girl alive with his hooks through  
her lips:  
All the fishes were rayed in blood,  
Said the dwindling ships.

Goodbye to chimneys and funnels,  
Old wives that spin in the smoke,

He was blind to the eyes of candles  
In the praying windows of waves

But heard his bait buck in the wake  
And tussle in a shoal of loves.  
Now cast down your rod, for the  
whole

Of the sea is hilly with whales,

She longs among horses and angels,  
The rainbow-fish bend in her joys,  
Floated the lost cathedral  
Chimes of the rocked buoys.

Where the anchor rode like a gull  
Miles over the moonstruck boat  
A squall of birds bellowed and fell,  
A cloud blew the rain from its throat;

He saw the storm smoke out to kill  
With fuming bows and ram of ice,  
Fire on starlight, rake Jesu's stream;  
And nothing shone on the water's face

But the oil and bubble of the moon,  
Plunging and piercing in his course  
The lured fish under the foam  
Witnessed with a kiss.

Whales in the wake like capes and  
Alps  
Quaked the sick sea and snouted deep,  
Deep the great bushed bait with  
raining lips  
Slipped the fins of those humpbacked  
tons

And fled their love in a weaving dip.  
Oh, Jericho was falling in their lungs!

## HORIZON

She nipped and dived in the nick of  
love,  
Spun on a spout like a long-legged  
ball

Till every beast blared down in a  
swerve  
Till every turtle crushed from his  
shell  
Till every bone in the scuttled grave  
Rose and crowed and fell!

Good luck to the hand on the rod,  
There is thunder under its thumbs;  
Gold gut is a lightning thread,  
His fiery reel sings off its flames,

The whirled boat in the burn of his  
blood  
Is crying from nets to knives,  
Oh the shearwater birds and their  
boatsized brood  
Oh the bulls of Biscay and their calves

Are making under the green, laid veil  
The long-legged beautiful bait their  
wives.  
Break the black news and paint on a  
sail  
Huge weddings in the waves,

Over the wakeward-flashing spray  
Over the gardens of the floor  
Clash out the mounting dolphin's day,  
My mast is a bell-spire,

Strike and smoothe, for my decks are  
drums,  
Sing through the water-spoken prow  
The octopus walking into her limbs  
The polar eagle with his tread of snow.

From salt-lipped beak to the kick of  
the stern  
Sing how the seal has kissed her dead!  
The long, laid minute's bride drifts on  
Old in her cruel bed.

Over the graveyard in the water  
Mountains and galleries beneath  
Nightingale and hyena  
Rejoicing for that drifting death

Sing and howl through sand and  
anemone  
Valley and sahara in a shell,  
Oh all the wanting flesh his enemy  
Thrown to the sea in the shell of a girl

Is old as water and plain as an eel;  
Always goodbye to the long-legged  
bread  
Scattered in the paths of his heels  
For the salty birds fluttered and fed

And the tall grains foamed in their  
bills;  
Always goodbye to the fires of the  
face,  
For the crab-backed dead on the sea-  
bed rose  
And scuttled over her eyes,

The blind, clawed stare is cold as  
sleet.  
The tempter under the eyelid  
Who shows to the selves asleep  
Mast-high moon-white women naked

Walking in wishes and lovely for  
shame  
Is dumb and gone with his flame of  
brides.  
Susannah's drowned in the bearded  
stream  
And no-one stirs at Sheba's side

But the hungry kings of the tides;  
Sin who had a woman's shape  
Sleeps till Silence blows on a cloud  
And all the lifted waters walk and  
leap.

Lucifer that bird's dropping  
Out of the sides of the north

## BALLAD OF THE LONG-LEGGED BAIT II

Has melted away and is lost  
Is always lost in her vaulted breath,

Venus lies star-struck in her wound  
And the sensual ruins make  
Seasons over the liquid world,  
White springs in the dark.

Always goodbye, cried the voices  
through the shell,  
Goodbye always for the flesh is cast  
And the fisherman winds his reel  
With no more desire than a ghost.

Always good luck, praised the finned  
in the feather  
Bird after dark and the laughing fish  
As the sails drank up the hail of  
thunder  
And the long-tailed lightning lit his  
catch.

The boat swims into the six-year  
weather,  
A wind throws a shadow and it freezes  
fast.  
See what the gold gut drags from  
under  
Mountains and galleries to the crest!

See what clings to hair and skull  
As the boat skims on with drinking  
wings!  
The statues of great rain stand still,  
And the flakes fall like hills.

Sing and strike his heavy haul  
Toppling up the boatside in a snow  
of light!  
His decks are drenched with miracles.  
Oh miracle of fishes! the long dead  
bite!

Out of the urn the size of a man,  
Out of the room the weight of his  
trouble  
Out of the house that holds a town  
In the continent of a fossil

One by one in dust and shawl,  
Dry as echoes and insect-faced,  
His fathers cling to the hand of the  
girl

And the dead hand leads the past,

Leads them as children and as air  
On to the blindly tossing tops;  
The centuries throw back their hair  
And the old men sing from newborn  
lips:

Time is bearing another son.  
Kill Time! She turns in her pain!  
The oak is felled in the acorn  
And the hawk in the egg kills the  
wren.

He who blew the great fire in  
And died on a hiss of flames  
Or walked on the earth in the evening  
Counting the denials of the grains

Clings to her drifting hair, and climbs;  
And he who taught their lips to sing  
Weeps like the risen sun among  
The liquid choirs of his tribes.

The rod bends low, divining land,  
And through the sundered water  
crawls  
A garden holding to her hand  
With birds and animals

With men and women and waterfalls  
Trees cool and dry in the whirlpool  
of ships  
And stunned and still on the green,  
laid veil  
Sand with legends in its virgin laps  
And prophets loud on the burned  
dunes;  
Insects and valleys hold her thighs  
hard,  
Times and places grip her breast bone,  
She is breaking with seasons and  
clouds;

## HORIZON

Round her trailed wrist fresh water  
weaves,  
With moving fish and rounded stones  
Up and down the greater waves  
A separate river breathes and runs;

Strike and sing his catch of fields  
For the surge is sown with barley,  
The cattle graze on the covered foam,  
The hills have footed the waves away,

With wild sea fillies and soaking  
bridles  
With salty colts and gales in their  
limbs  
All the horses of his haul of miracles  
Gallop through the arched, green  
farms,

Trot and gallop with gulls upon them  
And thunderbolts in their manes.  
O Rome and Sodom Tomorrow and  
London  
The country tide is cobbled with  
towns,

And steeples pierce the cloud on her  
shoulder  
And the streets that the fisherman  
combed  
When his long-legged flesh was a  
wind on fire  
And his loin was a hunting flame

Coil from the thoroughfares of her  
hair

And terribly lead him home alive  
Lead her prodigal home to his terror,  
The furious ox-killing house of love.

Down, down, down, under the  
ground,  
Under the floating villages,  
Turns the moon-chained and water-  
wound  
Metropolis of fishes,

There is nothing left of the sea but its  
sound,  
Under the earth the loud sea walks,  
In deathbeds of orchards the boat  
dies down  
And the bait is drowned among hay-  
ricks,

Land, land, land, nothing remains  
Of the pacing, famous sea but its  
speech,  
And into its talkative seven tombs  
The anchor dives through the floors  
of a church.

Goodbye, good luck, struck the sun  
and the moon,  
To the fisherman lost on the land.  
He stands alone at the door of his  
home,  
With his long-legged heart in his  
hand.

# JUNE 23rd

By MASS-OBSERVATION<sup>1</sup>

The attack on Russia has overshadowed everything else this week. Reactions to the attack are, however, heavily coloured by preceding morale and prevailing mood. There were marked signs during last week of accelerating anxiety about the course of the war, a decline in confidence in our control of the war situation—encouraged by slow Syrian advances, doubtful Libya moves, and the Turkish-German pact. While people were still confident in victory, doubt about the method had much increased and with this, some impatience with the war—the desire to get it over and done with; associated with this, a tendency to try to put the war out of mind altogether whenever possible—a tendency rather unfavourable to industrial efficiency, etc. Offsetting this, the biggest constructive factor in the past week has been the fine weather, which has greatly assisted those who want to see the bright side; as typically put by a working-class housewife:

‘This weather does you good. Nothing like a bit of sun to make you feel alright with the world. Trouble is, it isn’t. Still, I’m sure it’s all going to come out right in the end.’

The lovely summer throws the grim events of war into sharper contrast, the sunshine nostalgically recalling days of comparative ease and calm.

Into this situation favourably impacted the Sunday morning news of Russia and the Sunday evening speech of the Prime Minister. These are treated separately below, Churchill’s broadcast being correlated with other investigation done in the week in continuation of points raised previously.

#### A. REACTIONS TO RUSSIA

Detailed study of Russian reaction was made from Sunday morning onwards in five London areas, Bolton, Ipswich and Oxford. Results from all these places closely correspond, and for all practical purposes the reaction may be treated as general,

<sup>1</sup> Part of one of ‘Mass-Observation’s’ routine day-to-day reports on the impact of war upon civilian mind and mood. Written 23/6/41.

local differences being much less important than individual and temperamental differences within the locality.

The *prevailing reaction now* is exceptionally keen interest, a great deal of confusion, a majority glad at the attack, extensive disagreement on Russia's prospects, some strong anxiety (especially among women) at the war spreading, and in general an extremely fluid state of public opinion which might easily move in several directions, according to leadership and propaganda.

In the following analysis we will attempt to indicate the relative strength and quality of various elements in the present reaction at the mass level.

#### *First Reaction*

Up till the last, for every one person who expected Germany to attack Russia, three thought it was a bluff or that they would compromise. Few people believed that Hitler could be so strong as to take on Russia at will, and the general feeling for some months past had been that the *initiative lay with Russia*.

Many people thought the press were exaggerating the whole thing. The fact that the press was right has indeed surprised many people into unusually favourable comments on the press, and thereby been one step up in press prestige—after many steps down.

First reaction was, therefore, one of considerable amazement, coupled with bewilderment (Sunday morning and afternoon).

#### *Second Reaction*

Churchill's speech was well timed and exerted a necessary leadership on Sunday evening (for reactions to speech see Section B). The attack, which at first had seemed rather *remote*, now became more our own affair, part of our war. *Interest* increased, and by evening there was a high degree of spontaneous conversation on the subject; the only war news which has provoked comparable interest in the past year has been Hess. Both Russia and Hess contain some of the same elements of astonishment and mystery.

#### *Effect of Attack on Morale*

The major effect of the attack has been to make people feel much better about the war and its future; but this is by no means a universal reaction:

43 per cent were glad of the attack  
18 per cent were half-and-half  
16 per cent were sorry  
23 per cent. were undecided or unopinionated

It should be stressed that throughout there is no general agreed reaction, that there is *an exceptional degree of differing opinion and doubt.*

*Reasons for being glad*

People were glad about the news chiefly for the following reasons:

- (i) The attack would keep Germany busy and give us a rest—this was largely a ‘selfish attitude’ often connected with mention of air-raids, and sometimes associated with cynical comments like ‘good thing somebody else is carrying the baby’.
- (ii) That whatever the outcome, Germany is bound to lose many men and much equipment; and that at the best Russia might beat her (see below on public opinion on the probable outcome).
- (iii) The attack will give us *more time* to prepare. Those holding this view often showed signs of complacency or carelessness, repeating some of the Chamberlain slogans about time, etc.
- (iv) It will give us an ally, and we have no other ally at the moment. People mentioning this clearly got a feeling of relief from feeling that somebody else was fighting with us, and the same feeling underlies many people’s attitude. But on this, as on practically every point, there is confusion not only between different individuals, but also within the minds of individuals. For instance, this typical reaction:

‘I think it is a very good thing Russia coming into the war, we have no allies that are fighting and now we have got one. We can probably win now; Germany can’t beat Russia and she will probably use a lot of men up in the battle which will mean she can’t concentrate on us so much. I think it will slow up America, I don’t think she will come in until she sees what is happening to Russia.’

- (v) Some people were glad that something had just *happened* again, something to make the war more interesting and less boring. A break in the clinches, an uppercut bringing the spectators to their feet!
- (vi) 'When thieves fall out, it's good for honest men'.

*Reasons for being sad*

It should be noted at this stage that there is really very little anti-Russian feeling in this country, especially among the working and artisan classes.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the question of the Russians themselves, and how fightable they are, only seldom came into people's conversations.

- (i) Consequently, there is neither appreciable pleasure at the Russians being attacked as human beings, and not much regret on the same grounds. But quite a common humane attitude, especially among women, is sympathy and sorrow at anyone and anywhere being bombed or blitzed.
- (ii) There is considerable anxiety, especially among older women, at the war being extended in this way:

'It seems to be going all over the world.'  
 'Where will it ever end?'  
 'They'll be fighting in heaven presently.'

- (iii) Associated with the above, is the idea already stressed in previous reports that the whole pattern of civilization is getting out of control. The feeling that unpleasantness and horror may unexpectedly explode anywhere. And with this, worry about *whatever will happen next?*
- (iv) Others feel that the attack will lengthen the war, and there is quite a lot of comment on this theme, especially stressing it will make it last an 'extra two years'.
- (v) People are depressed because they take the very fact of a German attack as being a mark of German strength. They say that Hitler has always known what he was doing up till now, and so go on to conclude that he has only attacked Russia because he is certain he can overrun it without difficulty.

<sup>1</sup> A particular characteristic of this war is the lack of mass hatred for any enemy, including German (still called by the affectionate bedroom term 'Jerry' by nearly all civilians). The press gives a rather misleading impression of the private attitudes.

- (vi) There is also strong feeling that if Russia is beaten, there is nothing left to keep Germany under control. Here there is a tension point for the future. Many people expect that if Russia is beaten, Germany is free to plan the invasion of Britain one hundred per cent, and need think of nothing else in the world.
- (vii) Finally, some people think that Russia hates us just as much as Germany does, and are anxious that if she beats Germany, she will then attack us. There is quite a striking degree of comment along this line:

‘Well now, this country will have to change her tone a bit. I suppose it will be Stalin dear, from now on. We’re always such hypocrites, we’re bound to say Russia is our ally. It’s absolutely no use our pretending that Russia has come into the war because she believes in our cause, because she loathes our guts.’

‘I think it’s a very dangerous thing Russia coming into the war. Whoever wins we will have to fight. I am afraid people will imagine it’s a good thing, but it isn’t a good thing. Russia hates us more than she hates Germany.’

#### *Public Estimate of Prospects*

Again, there is a wide difference of opinion on this subject. On the whole, men tended quite strongly to think that Russia would at least *resist* successfully, while women tended to think that they would not be able to do much against the Germans.

The Finnish campaign is often adduced as evidence of Russia’s weakness. But more often, the argument is simply that the Germans are so efficient and so well equipped they can do what they like and overrun anything.

At present, only a small minority think that Russia will actually beat up Germany, and very few indeed visualize Russia driving the Germans back and in her turn overrunning Germany.

On the other hand, few people at present really expect that the Germans will gain very much, even if they are successful. The commonest argument there is of the *Russian colossus*, so enormous as to be unbeatable, a great sponge which can absorb any attack. The Japanese war on China and the experiences of Napoleon are

often adduced in support of this line. The vast man-power of Russia, and its enormous resources, are also stressed.

While there is no clear-cut opinion on the subject, probably the main idea people have at the moment is that *Russia cannot beat the Germans*, but that the Germans are stronger and will be more militarily successful, though they cannot cope with the size of the Russian problem and will in the end exhaust their resources on this account, leading to some sort of stalemate. Typical comment on this:

'Russia is so enormous they really couldn't be beaten, they are capable of absorbing shock as China can. I am sure that Russia can't win either, so heaven knows what will happen.'

#### *Questions in the Public Mind*

Already there are a large number of questions developing out of this expected turn in the war. People have got it fairly clear in their minds that we represented the 'democracies' fighting the 'dictators', of which Russia was one. People did not feel strongly anti-Russia or anti-Stalin, and indeed there has long been considerable pro-Russian feeling among a large section of the population who are not interested in Communism (there are a number of published pre-war surveys illustrating this).

People had also got fairly clear in their minds the line they thought the war was taking, and the rôle of Russians the cunning onlooker who would *choose its own time* to do what it wanted to do, whatever that was. The German attack has therefore raised many queries of which the following are among the most important:

- Is Russia really a dictatorship? Or was that all propaganda?
- What is our attitude now towards dictatorships?
- What about the ban on the *Daily Worker*?
- What will happen if Russia wins?
- Isn't Poland at war with Russia? How about that?
- Wasn't it only a short time ago we were backing the gallant Finns against Russian aggression? How about that?
- What are the Japanese going to do—will they attack Russia?

But stronger than any of these questions is the extreme ideological confusion now produced by our sudden co-operation with a country against which our national press (in particular) and American films have developed continuous hostile propaganda, and against which a wide range of our statesmen have warned us, especially since the war. The exact quality of this uneasiness can perhaps be best expressed in the following typical verbatims:

1. 'Russia is all communists and we are all capitalists, that's what we are, and that's what they are. How can we mix?'
2. 'The whole thing is a bloody mess up. I suppose this is what is meant by a class war.'
3. 'It's a funny turn up, isn't it? We shall solve the mystery of things one of these days.'

#### B. THE PRIME MINISTER'S BROADCAST: AND HIS PRESTIGE

##### (i) *Churchill's Speech*

The Prime Minister's broadcast on Sunday night was generally approved and received more favourable comment than any of his recent broadcasts. People commented that in it he recaptured some of the vigour and toughness which people expect from him and which some thought he had rather lost. Perhaps the most typical comment was:

‘One of his best.’

There was, however, some adverse comment on alleged insincerity, the way he had always been against Russia and now turned round, but without frankly saying so, mixing it up with ‘maidens still smiling’, etc. One comment, representative of a minority feeling was that Churchill had said to himself:

‘I wonder if I can get away with this speech.’

In general, reaction to this broadcast has stepped up the Premier's speech prestige again. There had been a decline (on a small scale) in enthusiasm for his speeches lately, with one person in five making unfavourable comments. The most frequent criticism, especially amongst women, of recent speeches and broadcasts:

F40B: ‘Very evasive.’

F40C: ‘Well, there's no change in them from when he was first Prime Minister.’

F25B: 'They're boring.'

M25B: 'Not much. He seems to be trying to impress people with cheerfulness.'

There were also a few more general criticisms:

M25C: 'I don't think much of them.'

M25B: 'Not very impressive.'

(ii) *Churchill as post-war P.M.*

Detailed opinions (London only so far) on the subject of whether or not it would be a good thing or a bad thing for Churchill to be Prime Minister after the war, were collected in mid-June with the following results:

	<i>Male</i> per cent	<i>Female</i> per cent	<i>Total</i> per cent
Good	45	36	40
Bad	45	35	40
No opinion	10	29	20

Opinions are thus very even on this point, with men more against than women. Some significant comments:

M40B: 'I think he's too revolutionary for peacetime.'

M60C: 'I think he deserves a better reward than that.'

M60D: 'Oh yes, certainly. He's had the sour, he can have some of the sweet.'

M35D: 'No. After the war we want to have social reform.'

M40D: 'I don't like 'im. Mr. Churchill's never been a pal of mine.'

F50C: 'I think he's too much of a dictator for a peacetime Prime Minister.'

F50C: 'I don't think he'll be strong enough to continue.'

F45C: 'I think he's too old.'

The replies show that for all Mr. Churchill's popularity, there are a large number of people who would not trust him in peacetime, or who feel his personality is only suitable to war. And this in spite of the general atmosphere of warmest praise of Churchill which exists at present.

(iii) *Alternatives to Churchill*

Londoners were asked who they thought would make the best Prime Minister if Churchill died suddenly. About one person in ten thought there was no one to take Churchill's place, and rather more had no interest or opinion on the subject:

'I'm damned if I know.'

'I wouldn't care to support anyone, they're all mediocre.'

'One of our errand boys—we've got none left.'

Three people stand out as candidates, in the following order:

1. Eden
2. Bevin
3. Beaverbrook (nearly equal to 2)

Eden is far and away the most popular candidate, being mentioned more than three times as often as Bevin. He has always been one of the most popular politicians, and in several pre-war polls he was better favoured for the premiership than Churchill.

The only other Conservative mentioned with any sort of frequency was Duff Cooper. The only significant Liberal candidate was Hore-Belisha, who is one of the most popular also-rans. But there are a wide range of Labour men mentioned—Morrison, Attlee, Cripps in that order, also Dalton, Alexander, Greenwood, Pritt, etc.

## PEACE AIMS

The German attack on Russia is likely to raise again in people's minds the problem of war aims, of what we are fighting for. The idea that we are fighting *against* dictatorship, including Stalin's, was fairly well fixed in the public mind, though there is little mass antagonism to Russia itself, and the new situation is bound to lead to some changes in focus. Just before the attack on Russia, a repeat of surveys made in April 1941 and December 1940, showed that public opinion on the subject of the Government declaring its war aims had not appreciably changed, except in one respect—a steady increase in those saying we had already declared our war aims. This group were represented as follows:

- |                             |
|-----------------------------|
| 8 per cent in December 1940 |
| 12 per cent in April 1941   |
| 19 per cent in June 1941    |

This steady growth in those clear about our war aims is likely now to be put back :

As before, people were asked what they thought our war aims should be. The only appreciable change in recent months is a tendency to increase negative statements (destroy the Nazis, etc.), a slight increase in stress on home policy changes, and a slight decrease in general ideological peace aiming with the whole of humanity as its scope.

The things people spontaneously named most often as our war aims were as follows, in order of frequency:

1. Destroy Nazis, etc.
2. For freedom or anti-Dictatorship
3. Reforms of Home policy
4. World peace, humanity, etc.

Another significant feature is a sharp *decrease* in those having no opinion on this subject.

#### *Post-war Pessimism*

Closely associated with peace aims are people's feelings about the post-war world. In a series of surveys undertaken by M-O and by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (see *Economic Journal*), it has been shown that a very extensive economic pessimism exists in a whole series of areas surveyed throughout the country. A recent repeat survey in five London boroughs showed a further slight increase in pessimism since February—there is considerable error in the figures, which are indicative only of a general trend.

Attitude to Post-war Economy	PERCENTAGE ADOPTING THIS ATTITUDE	
	In Feb. 1941 per cent	In June 1941 per cent
Optimistic	21	18
Pessimistic	59	63
Uncertain or no opinion	20	19

This subject has now been studied in a badly blitzed town, . . . . . , as part of a very detailed survey of the whole population

of four streets. Here, the figure for economic pessimism reached a record high level and optimism a record low level.

7 per cent were optimistic

78 per cent pessimistic

15 per cent were uncertain or un-opinionated

### FANTASIES

The Russian news, with its confusing impact, has had some curious semi-rumour effects, in producing peculiar semi-rumour theories of a rather unusual type, e.g.:

1. Turkey has become definitely anti-British and is also about to attack Russia.
2. Now that Russia has come into the war, America won't—you can't expect them both to.
3. Stalin was drunk when he kissed Matsuoka and said 'We're both Asiatics,' and this did a lot of harm in making the Axis think Stalin was loosing his grip.
4. Some Russians have landed at Dover! (This seems to be a hangover of the bearded Russian rumour of the last war.)

## WAR SYMPOSIUM — IV

*WILLIAM SANSOM*

### THE WALL

IT was our third job that night. Until this thing happened, work had been without incident. There had been shrapnel, a few enquiring bombs, and some huge fires; but these were unremarkable and have since merged without identity into the neutral maze of fire and noise and water and night, without date and without hour, with neither time nor form, that lowers mistily at the back of my mind as a picture of the air-raid season.

I suppose we were worn down and shivering. Three a.m. is a mean-spirited hour. I suppose we were drenched, with the cold hose water trickling in at our collars and settling down at the tails of our shirts. Without doubt the heavy brass couplings felt moulded from metal-ice. Probably the open roar of the pumps drowned the petulant buzz of the raiders above, and certainly the ubiquitous fire-glow made an orange stage-set of the streets. Black water would have puddled the City alleys and I suppose our hands and our faces were black as the water. Black with hacking about among the burnt-up rafters. These things were an every-night nonentity. They happened and they were not forgotten because they were never even remembered.

But I do remember it was our third job. And there we were—Len, Loft, Verno and myself—playing a fifty-foot jet up the face of a tall City warehouse and thinking of nothing at all. You don't think of anything after the first few hours. You just watch the white pole of water lose itself in the fire and you think of nothing. Sometimes you move the jet over to another window. Sometimes the orange dims to black—but you only ease your grip on the ice-cold nozzle and continue pouring careless gallons through the window. You know the fire will fester for hours yet. However, that night the blank, indefinite hours of waiting were sharply interrupted—by an unusual sound. Very suddenly a long rattling crack of bursting brick and mortar perforated the moment. And then the upper half of that five-storey building heaved over towards us. It hung there, poised for a timeless second before

rumbling down at us. I was thinking of nothing at all and then I was thinking of everything in the world.

In that simple second my brain digested every detail of the scene. New eyes opened at the sides of my head so that, from within, I photographed a hemispherical panorama bounded by the huge length of the building in front of me and the narrow lane on either side.

Blocking us on the left was the squat trailer pump, roaring and quivering with effort. Water throbbed from its overflow valves and from leakages in the hose and couplings. A ceaseless stream spewed down its grey sides into the gutter. But nevertheless a fat iron exhaust pipe glowed red-hot in the middle of the wet engine. I had to look past Lofty's face. Lofty was staring at the controls, hands tucked into his armpits for warmth. Lofty was thinking of nothing. He had a black diamond of soot over one eye, like the White-eyed Kaffir in negative.

To the other side of me was a free run up the alley. Overhead swung a sign—'Catto and Henley'. I wondered what in hell they sold. Old stamps? The alley was quite free. A couple of lengths of dead, deflated hose wound over the darkly glistening pavement. Charred flotsam dammed up one of the gutters. A needle of water fountained from a hole in a live hose-length. Beneath a blue shelter light lay a shattered coping stone. The next shop along was a tobacconist's, windowless, with fake display cartons torn open for anybody to see. The alley was quite free.

Behind me, Len and Verno shared the weight of the hose. They heaved up against the strong backward drag of water-pressure. All I had to do was yell 'Drop it'—and then run. We could risk the live hose snaking up at us. We could run to the right down the free alley—Len, Verno and me. But I never moved. I never said 'Drop it' or anything else. That long second held me hypnotized, rubber boots cemented to the pavement. Ton upon ton of red-hot brick hovering in the air above us numbed all initiative. I could only think. I couldn't move.

Six yards in front stood the blazing building. A minute before I would never have distinguished it from any other drab Victorian atrocity happily on fire. Now I was immediately certain of every minute detail. The building was five storeys high. The top four storeys were fiercely alight. The rooms inside were alive with red fire. The black outside walls remained untouched. And thus, like

the lighted carriages of a night express, there appeared alternating rectangles of black and red that emphasized vividly the extreme symmetry of the window spacing: each oblong window shape posed as a vermillion panel set in perfect order upon the dark face of the wall. There were ten windows to each floor, making forty windows in all. In rigid rows of ten, one row placed precisely above the other, with strong contrasts of black and red, the blazing windows stood to attention in strict formation. The oblong building, the oblong windows, the oblong spacing. Orange-red colour seemed to *bulge* from the black framework, assumed tactile values like boiling jelly that expanded inside a thick black squared grill.

Three of the storeys, thirty blazing windows and their huge frame of black brick, a hundred solid tons of hard, deep Victorian wall, pivoted over towards us and hung flatly over the alley. Whether the descending wall actually paused in its fall I can never know. Probably it never did. Probably it only seemed to hang there. Probably my eyes digested its action at an early period of momentum, so that I saw it 'off true' but before it had gathered speed.

The night grew darker as the great mass hung over us. Through smoke-fogged fireglow the moonlight had hitherto penetrated to the pit of our alley through declivities in the skyline. Now some of the moonlight was being shut out as the wall hung ever further over us. The wall shaded the moonlight like an inverted awning. Now the pathway of light above had been squeezed to a thin line. That was the only silver lining I ever believed in. It shone out—a ray of hope. But it was a declining hope, for although at this time the entire hemispherical scene appeared static, an imminence of movement could be sensed throughout—presumably because the scene was actually moving. Even the speed of the shutter which closed the photograph on my mind was powerless to exclude this motion from a deeper consciousness. The picture appeared static to the limited surface senses, the eyes and the material brain, but beyond that there was hidden movement.

The second was timeless. I had leisure to remark many things. For instance, that an iron derrick, slightly to the left, would not hit me. This derrick stuck out from the building and I could feel its sharpness and hardness as clearly as if I had run my body intimately over its contour. I had time to notice that it carried a

foot-long hook, a chain with three-inch rings, two girder supports and a wheel more than twice as large as my head.

A wall will fall in many ways. It may sway over to the one side or the other. It may crumble at the very beginning of its fall. It may remain intact and fall flat. This wall fell as flat as a pancake. It clung to its shape through ninety degrees to the horizontal. Then it detached itself from the pivot and slammed down on top of us.

The last resistance of bricks and mortar at the pivot point cracked off like automatic gun fire. The violent sound both deafened us and brought us to our senses. We dropped the hose and crouched. Afterwards Verno said that I knelt slowly on one knee with bowed head, like a man about to be knighted. Well, I got my knighting. There was an incredible noise—a thunderclap condensed into the space of an eardrum—and then the bricks and the mortar came tearing and burning into the flesh of my face.

Lofty, away by the pump, was killed. Len, Verno and myself they dug out. There was very little brick on top of us. We had been lucky. We had been framed by one of those symmetrical, oblong window spaces.

R. IRONSIDE

# THE ARTISTIC VISION OF PROUST

A BELIEF in the moral function of æsthetic experience, one with which Proust's laborious study of Ruskin had made him familiar in a most passionate form, underlies the numerous reflections on the subject of art which recur throughout *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, strengthening as the book proceeds until finally, when the principal characters of the novel are standing shrivelled on the edge of the grave, so many spent phenomena, it takes on the proportions of a faith, spreading a timely light over the whole darkened situation; it is then made clear that the delights of æsthetic experience—and indeed, for the artist, the moral obligation to explore and preserve it, so that it is laid up as treasure, but so that he can, if he will, put his hands on it and display it formally, as in a monstrance—that these delights are what, in the last resort, prevent the solid ground failing beneath our feet, console us in the face of the vanity, proved in Proust's eyes, of human contacts. This is not unusual teaching; moreover we may question its validity in the context. Marcel, the hero of the novel, is a man in advanced middle age at the moment when this conviction takes full possession of his mind; during a reception at the Hotel de Guermantes at which he is reintroduced to the circles he had frequented as a young man, he becomes startlingly aware that he has passed the age at which it could seem reasonable to hope for a fleeting liaison either with a débutante or with some 'jeune laitière,' that he cannot now re-enter the budding grove on any terms of equality with its familiar spirits. It is not surprising that this revelation should have encouraged him in the belief that more real, more rare satisfactions were to be sought from the sphere of art. There is an element of conventional disillusionment in his attitude which might tempt us to cast doubts on the impartiality of his belief; as Marcel would probably have admitted, further experience of the right kind might have so modified the state of his emotions as to cause him to reject it entirely. But we are not told that anything

took place. Proust's own withdrawal from Society, whatever its subsidiary reasons, his entire, enduring absorption in the composition of his work at a parallel moment of his life would serve to confirm the view that he regarded his hero's state of mind at the Guermantes party as absolutely valuable. Any notion that the ravages of age, merely, prompted this awakening of faith must appear false in the light of the many 'monitory gleams and vital sounds' which are perceived by the hero in the region of his inner spirit, with increasingly delicious clarity as the subject develops, and which may be said to prepare the reader for the final illumination; so that it is rather a re-awakening, and a lesson which pierces the whole structure of the writer's researches, a house of life in which there are so many exotic mansions that the moral of its building, though it penetrates every one, is veiled by the brilliance of their appointments. The labyrinth of personages and events is laid out with such natural effect, lives so vividly and sharply that there is a case for belittling the long passages of repetitive argument and psychological botanization through which the author reaches his æsthetic conclusions; one would not, indeed, consider the intrigue of the book as the mere pretext for more abstract discussions. These, nevertheless, carry its principal messages. Mr. Derek Leon, in his recent critical biography of the writer, gives only a chapter to the 'world of art'. The more penetrating life by Pierre Quint, published before the whole of *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* has been issued, has a section 'L'Art et le Sentiment du Divin', a more perspicacious title; but neither writer gives sufficient prominence, albeit among so much which deserves prominence, to Proust's positive belief in the saving graces of the arts. In this respect, the interest of his message does not lie in the somewhat commonplace affirmation that, having been crossed in love, having lost one's youth, having sounded the hollows of high society, there yet remain the crowning solace, the only worthy pleasures that life has to offer, the joys of æsthetic experience and artistic creation; the force and interest of Proust's claim upon our attention to his feelings in this matter must properly be founded upon his singular conception of the nature of such experience. Artists of most kinds and the hero's response to their works and characters fill vital sections of the book; their waxing and waning enchantment, their singleminded personalities, singleminded only in relation to the mercurial

gyrations of the less preoccupied characters, emerge, however uncertainly they may play this part at times, as rallying points for Marcel's spirits.

The work of the impressionist painter, Elstir, plays a peculiarly revealing role in the growth of Marcel's emotional attitude to the arts, his reactions to it being at once a premonition of the position in which he finally found himself and a confession that there was little in the prevailing vision of the time which accorded with his deepest impulses. It would be vain to attempt to identify Elstir with any one historical person even if Proust did not warn us that his characters were concocted from observations directed according to his requirements—or, as often, by happy chance—upon those whom he knew either personally or by their works. It is, however, not difficult to recognize, in particular phases of Elstir's development, allusions to artists whose works may be seen in public galleries. His earliest-known paintings are those of mythological subjects, forming part of the collection of the Duchesse de Guermantes, in the examination of which Marcel became so absorbed that the company assembled in the drawing-room for dinner was kept waiting nearly three quarters of an hour. In these pictures, the Muses, for example, were seen as beings belonging to some now fossilized species, but who, one felt, in the remote past might have been seen in the evening threading their way along some mountain path; '*quelquefois un poète... (caractérisé par une certaine insexualité)*, se promenait avec une muse, comme dans la nature, des créatures d'espèces différentes mais amies et qui vont de compagnie'. It would seem that the prototype of this phase is Gustave Moreau, a probability which becomes a certainty when we read that '*Dans une de ces aquarelles, on voyait un poète épuisé d'une longue course en montagne qu'un centaure qu'il a rencontré, touché de sa fatigue, prend sur son dos*'—a sufficiently exact description of Moreau's *Le Centaure et le Poète*. Smart society accepted and acquired examples of this early manner. As a youth who was about to win a welcome in such society by means of the precocious intellectual brilliance of his views, Marcel was able to feel that art of this kind had been superseded by Impressionism and to turn with a more lively admiration to works of Elstir's Impressionist period. There is no inconsequence in this development of the artist's talent; Degas' earliest pictures *Sémiramide*, for instance, or *Les Malheurs de la Ville*

*d'Orléans* are equally and similarly remote in subject matter from his mature productions. The portrait of the actress, *Miss Sacripant* (Odette de Crecy in fancy dress), is evidently later, though Elstir is able to qualify it as merely a 'pochade de jeunesse'; the vicious and dreamy air of the sitter, 'l'attrait irritant qu'elle allait offrir aux sens blasés ou dépravés de certains spectateurs,' the independent and ambiguous interest of her somewhat piquant costume, the titillating quality of the technique of the picture which reminded Marcel, when he found it in Elstir's studio at Balbec, of the fur of a cat, the petals of a carnation, the feathers of a dove, these intriguing characteristics recall, as Albert Feuillerat has pointed out, certain portraits of Whistler. We are not, however, shown further examples of Elstir's work in precisely this manner, and the interest of Marcel's visit to the Balbec studio is concentrated upon the group of impressionist seascapes painted in that youthful, salubrious, poetic neighbourhood. These, one is bound to feel, are Monets; the lilac foam, the rocks seemingly of pink granite, the vapours of the shifting tide, the whole 'poudroiemment de soleil et de vagues' could hardly be the product of another's vision. The fishing fleet of Elstir's *Port de Carquethuit* echoes the forest of masts in Monet's *Port de Honfleur* or *Port du Havre*; and that other canvas which renders, 'au pied des immenses falaises, la grâce liliputienne des voiles blanches sur le miroir bleu où elles semblaient des papillons endormis' must be a recollection of the same painter's series of the cliffs at Etretat. Shortly after the flight of Albertine, aspects of Marcel's vanished friend are vividly and painfully brought before him by two paintings, 'ou dans un paysage touffu il y a des femmes nues' and in one of which 'l'une des jeunes filles lève le pied. . . . De l'autre elle pousse à l'eau l'autre jeune fille qui gaiement résiste, la cuisse levée, son pied tremplant à peine dans l'eau bleue', a scene which at once gives expression to Marcel's vision of Albertine's illicit passions and recalls the 'méandre de cou de cygne' of her thighs as she lay in bed beside him. The brief account we are given of these works suggests Renoir's large *Baigneuses* of 1885 and the lovely series of smaller canvasses of which it is the centrepiece. Yet this suggestion is interesting simply because it prompts us to pursue the image of Albertine and her laundress among Renoir's productions in this manner. At such a critical moment Marcel was in no fit state to ponder upon artistic quality, to form

opinions upon the trend of Elstir's painting by making comparisons between the bathers and the pictures he had studied at Balbec. The former, indeed, are introduced merely to sharpen the anguish of his bereft condition. At another stage, Elstir is revealed to us as the author of a series, which we may attribute to Degas, of works devoted to what then seemed the novel theme of woman 'surprise dans l'intime de sa vie, de tous les jours,' pictures which discover unsuspected graces in the movements of women doing their hair, drying themselves, warming their feet. That there was a distinct flavour of Degas in Elstir's composite style might already have been inferred from the enthusiasm with which he described to Marcel, on the occasion of the visit to the Balbec studio, the luminous spectacle of the racecourse. Yet his interest in this motif from modern life is surpassed by his admiration of the airy splendours of a regatta, bathed in the 'glauque lumière d'un hippodrome marin,' as rich in the possibilities of exploitation, for a contemporary artist, as the ponderous magnificence of the nautical ceremonies of Venice for Carpaccio. This delight is, of course, Monet's; Degas' racecourses and jockeys are accessory, their role in Elstir's conversation being simply to amplify the general assertion that it is a vision of modern life which chiefly inspires the painter. The series of pictures showing women at their toilet is even less essential to Elstir's true significance in the story, serving primarily, indeed, to throw a surprising light on the capacities of Madame Verdurin, for it was she, we learn, who first suggested to Elstir this field of study and who had originally attracted his attention to many of the subjects from which he derived his happiest effects; Marcel recognized that Madame Verdurin considered herself to be a muse, but was shocked at his lack of perception on discovering that she had real grounds for this opinion. The art of Elstir is thus used, its characteristics multiplied, while it remains, in the broadest sense of the term, impressionist, to develop plots and touch up characters, without enlarging in any way our knowledge of Marcel's aesthetic response to it; it tells us, for instance, about the past of Odette de Crecy or the fashionable limits to the artistic tastes of the Guermantes. In what manner its qualites enriched Marcel's emotional life can only properly be studied with reference to the works of Elstir-Monet. Marcel's feelings about these pictures bore no relation to the attitude of

mind in which connoisseurs of impressionism so often indulge, that attitude which can regard a Renoir as a delicious morsel, or a Pissarro as if it exhaled the bouquet of some discreet but exquisite wine and that seems to shrink from the unfettered brilliance of the latest Monets, leaning upon the more obvious refinements of his early pictures. Marcel's reactions were of a more profound and even disturbing kind; Elstir certainly convinced him of those commonplaces in the criticism of impressionism, the beauties of the modern social scene, the elegance of contemporary dress and gestures, explained to him also that atmosphere and light properly apprehended can transfigure the ugliness of modern constructions so that their shapes seem quite subsidiary to the radiance they reflect. But such views could not have been immediately welcome to a devoted student of Ruskin, 'ce puissant cerveau'. They may have indirectly provoked Marcel's delight in the Trocadero, not, however, because he saw it catching, or refracting, or shimmering in, the light, but because it recalled the formal architecture in certain backgrounds of Mantegna; Marcel passionately loved the past, and his power of observing externals was as limited as his gift for exploring character was extensive and penetrating. He was thus ill-qualified to enjoy straightforwardly and simply the impressionist vision of the world, one which arose from the sensitivity of the artist's retina, from his acute perception of the most rapid moments of weather, the most transitory and instinctive of human movements, and was not one elaborated from the semi-conscious regions of personality. Marcel's individual judgment, however, would seem to class the Balbec seascapes as the fruits of some such subjective vision. For him, they presented a succession of metaphors, as in a poem, metaphors moreover of a sibylline character, almost misrepresentations, so that at first glance the reverse of their author's intentions was conveyed to the reader. Looking at the *Port de Carquethuit* he saw the masts of the boats moored at the jetty as so many pinnacles built on dry land, while the churches of Criquebec seemed to emerge from the water 'soufflées en albatre ou en écume et enfermées dans la ceinture d'un arc-en-ciel versicolore', a mystic and unreal picture. Elsewhere, in the same work, a boat which should have been sailing in mid-ocean appeared to be riding through the town; another, upon a sunlit stretch of water white with foam, seemed to be rising out of a field of snow; the ocean itself was part sky,

the sky part ocean. A palace mirrored in the water became, under this transmuting lens, a symmetrical object, so deceptive was the identity between it and its reflection; in a similar fashion, the spires of a riverside town seemed to hold in suspense, like pendulums, the houses clustering beneath them. It was a world of mirages which, however, as Marcel was quick to realise, were evolved from certain optical tricks recurring in Nature for those whose eyes were sufficiently 'innocent' to perceive them. The absence of all apparent sequence between the causes and effects of such phenomena charmed his imagination. It was a source of delight to Marcel, conjuring up a sense of poetic correspondences, that nature and, indeed, human nature should so often prove to be the exact contrary of what it appeared to be, that the most bizarre and striking apparitions, the social conduct of Charlus, for instance, may be the result of some not uncommon natural accident. Elstir's work was, for him, composed 'from those rare moments 'ou l'on voit la nature telle qu'elle est, poétiquement'. The design of the pictures, the dexterity of brushwork they revealed, the actual physical facts of the artist's translation of his vision were evidently quite subordinate considerations in Marcel's eyes; it was the reconciliation effected between the fantastic and the real that gave the key to their beauty. More than that of Degas, Pissarro, or Sisley, more even than that of Renoir, the painting of Monet may be explored in this somewhat romantic manner. He was the most Turnerian of the impressionists; his art springs from a deep well of poetry, a sense of ravished amazement at the unparalleled splendours of nature so that to many eyes his snowfields glow with an iridescence, his seas shine with a multitude of lights that, like the electric visions of Turner, are a reproach to the lovely effects they imitate. Yet we must suppose that Marcel, to whom the spectacle of nature was a heraldic field the signs of which were meaningless until they recalled some moment of his history (or until their symbolism seemed actually to press for an interpretation) could not have felt that impressionism in any of its forms fulfilled the secret demands of his temperament. We may even conclude that Marcel's admiration for impressionism contained an element of artificiality. He could not doubt that the growing prestige of its adherents was deserved; he could not fail to recognize that theirs was the major contribution of the time to the evolution of

painting, or indeed that such recognition would range him among an intellectual élite, even amid ‘les cénacles qui préparent les apothéoses.’ He, in fact, half surrenders before Elstir, before an art which set an absolute value upon appearances, those feelings which rose at uncertain intervals from the remote corners of his mind, which filled him with a sweetness and a beatitude which in the end he comes to identify with the material out of which a work of art is constructed.

These feelings were rare, though unfailingly recurring, visitants, filling moments of the greatest fecundity but also of the most fleeting brevity. The earliest to be recorded occurred at an unspecified period of Marcel’s life. Persuaded by his mother to have tea, a meal he did not normally take, he mechanically dipped a *madeleine* into his cup; its taste, thus rendered warm and aromatic, its soft sodden texture, for no immediately apparent reason suffused his being with a mysterious and intense delight, under the influence of which the ephemeral character of human existences, their trials and vicissitudes seemed, as in love, quite illusory; it was like the galvanization of a sixth sense, a light inside him which he struggled vainly to retain, but not without recalling the previous occasions on which he had eaten such cakes dipped in tea, when as a child, at Combray, his aunt offered him this humble delicacy Sunday mornings. With this realization, and conjured, so to speak, from his teacup, the scene of his life at Combray swam into the orbit of his inner vision, but bathed in an extraordinary clarity, in an atmosphere of vibrant sweetness, which rocked his senses. A surprising succession of such revelations crowded upon him during the brief interval which elapsed between the moment he entered the Hotel de Guermantes—as a middle-aged guest at the final and most bizarre of the social functions which mark such revealing phases of the author’s plot—and his appearance in the Guermantes’ drawing-room, so that the piazzetta at Venice, the seaside life of Balbec, its large modernistic hotel in which his heart had suffered such critical experiences, rose up before his face, in a new and exquisite guise, threatening the very existence of the Hotel de Guermantes which swung out of view like the scenery on a revolving stage. Marcel stumbled between the present and the past in a state of uncertainty ‘pareille à celle qu’on éprouve devant une vision ineffable au moment de s’endormir’. Hitherto, he had been content to accept, without

analysing, these ravishing apparitions. On this occasion, an ageing man who had cultivated excessively the pleasures and passions of social and personal relations, he set himself to probe the sources of a delight which he felt to be infinitely more valuable. He found that this arose from the identity between the past and the present momentarily effected through the agency of some quite trivial but evocative incident, such as that quoted of his eating a cake dipped in tea. The evocation was seen to be extra-temporal and consequently unsullied by the host of attendant circumstances which, in *time*, sway our impressions of things and people. It must furthermore be an evocation of something already existing—but normally irrevocable—in the hidden seams of Marcel's memory—for whom it represented an automatic 'retour aux profondeurs'. Marcel was thus himself at such moments freed from the narrow restrictions of time. 'Une minute affranchie de l'ordre du Temps' Proust wrote 'a recrée en nous, pour la sentir, l'homme affranchi de l'ordre du temps'. In these conditions, he was able to recapture the quintessence of the impressions made upon him by Combray, Balbec or Venice, unalloyed by the transient moods in which he may originally have received them, to make contact with a pure and timeless reality, 'l'essence permanente et habituellement cachée des choses'. To examine, to penetrate, to wring out to the last drop these fleeting perceptions of truth, and then to find for them a communicable equivalent, to achieve this, he felt, was to create a work of art.<sup>1</sup> Imagination, we are told, was his only means of enjoying beauty, but since one can only imagine what is absent, this means could not be applied to the realities of daily life—a law of nature which was now mystically dissolved in that peculiar clairvoyance which by a process of association enabled him simultaneously to imagine and to perceive, in fact to scent the air of paradise, because the only true paradise is paradise lost, the paradise that is recreated in tranquility, so that 'the tardy sand of time runs golden and the soul expands'. Marcel's faith in the exclusive powers of the

<sup>1</sup> A. Feuillerat (*Comment Marcel Proust a Composé son Roman*) records an interview granted to the journalist, E.-J. Bois, in 1913, in which Proust affirms the essential importance, in his work, of this conviction; Feuillerat goes on to show that Proust later tended increasingly to interpolate long passages of a purely intellectual and critical nature, a tendency probably attributable to the influence of Balzac.

imagination as the instrument of aesthetic perception was in effect a faith in the power of inspiration. The heart was more precious than the head, emotion more beautiful than calculation. 'L'intelligence ne peut trouver le temps perdu'. The truths revealed by the imagination were deeper, he was convinced, than any which might be grasped by the intelligence. Intellectuals are incapable of deducing the beauty of a work of art from the beauty of an image. So-called realism in art, which required the artist to leave his ivory tower, to apply his mind to the description of life as it was lived around him was an utterly false notion. Nothing is more remote from reality than a mere abstract of the lines and surfaces of things. It is gross and mistaken to attempt to discover in matter the intrinsic realities which reside only in the spirit, the sole sphere of reality for each one of us being our own sensibilities. Marcel's were most delicately strung, most receptive under the influence of those miraculous associations the effects of which have been described. He found, however, also, that kindred moments were sometimes vouchsafed to him which were not the fruit of any link with his vanished years. A cloud, a pebble, a flower, and, on one elaborately described occasion, the church towers of Martinville, were capable of suddenly compelling his regard, so that he felt them to be hieroglyphics concealing some precious image of truth which urgently required to be deciphered. While aware that Providence was, in the last resort, the purveyor of these riches, Marcel determined to live in constant watch for them. The spectacle of Proust in impassioned contemplation of a rose tree 'in total communion with Nature, with art, with life' has been recorded by Reynaldo Hahn who often, in Proust's company, assisted at similar scenes when the writer's 'whole being seemed to be concentrated upon a transcendent work of penetration,'<sup>1</sup> straining to fathom the quintessential nature of the object of his attention, waiting for that involuntary light which would uncover its esoteric beauties. It was always his desire that a simple aspect of nature inwardly observed, might prove to be a 'vase rempli de parfum, de sons, de moments, d'humeurs variées, de climats'. The final explanation of the nature of this compelling quest might well, Marcel thought, only be forthcoming in another world the presentiment of which is what moves us most both in

<sup>1</sup>Quoted and translated from *Hommage à Marcel Proust* by Havelock Ellis (*From Rousseau to Proust*).

art and in life. That the text of *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* is set with jewels of observation mined in this mysterious way we cannot doubt. The consistent beauty of Proust's imagery more than justifies the importance he attached to his method; an anthology of the passages of prose poetry in the book, such as has been made of the more rhapsodical pages in Ruskin, would compose a treasury of most illuminating metaphor and simile. Descriptions of nature or states of mind are strewn with sudden phrases or fragments of phrases which 'wrinse and ring the ear', so startle our vision, are evidently so just that we in fact feel a previously hidden truth has been delivered to us. Through the perpetually open windows of a Venetian hotel 'l'ombre tiede et le soleil verdâtre filaient comme sur une surface flottante et évoquaient le voisinage mobile, l'illumination, la miroitante instabilité du flot'. The smell of petrol, recalling excursions at Balbec, 'faisait fleurir, maintenant, de chaque côté de moi, bien que je fusse dans ma chambre obscure, les bleuets, les coquelicots et les trèfles incarnats, m'enivrait comme une odeur de campagne . . . une odeur devant quoi fuyaient les routes, changeait l'aspect du sol, accouraient les châteaux, palissaient le ciel, se décuplaient les forces, une odeur qui était comme un symbole de bondissement et de puissance . . .' Proust's memories of Marcel's grief for the loss of Albertine are charged with such poetic intuitions; 'Que le jour est lent à mourir' he writes 'les soirs demesurés de l'été . . . mais dans la porte de l'escalier . . . la partie vitrée était translucide et bleue, d'un bleu de fleur, d'un bleu d'aile d'insecte, d'un bleu qui m'eût semble beau si je n'avais senti qu'il était un dernier reflet coupant comme un acier, un coup suprême que dans sa cruauté infatigable me portait encore le jour'. Such quotations, necessarily chosen at random where the choice is so wide, cannot but be unsatisfactory samples of the atmosphere of poetry, even of unction, which floats through Proust's elaborate style and lingers especially where he is crystallising those automatic relationships between memory and sensation which were for him the vials of delicate but absolute truths.

This process of establishing links, 'rapports', between objects often mediocre in themselves and whole phases of past experience, of extracting a train of associations from, say, a spray of flowers growing alongside the railway or a pebble, is a surrealist one; it is an exploitation of the stirrings of the sub-conscious mind. The

reality pursued is not the reality we normally recognize as such, but a super-reality which cannot be grasped by the intellect until it has been involuntarily absorbed by the imagination. One would not, however, identify the visionary elements in Proust with the standardized Surrealism which rigidly adheres, like Byzantine art, to a now well known set of images; it might be more precise to consider him as a protagonist of the more elastic 'surnaturalisme' of Gerard de Nerval whose *Sylvie* he greatly admired. Yet he was certainly intimately engaged in the same spheres of the mind as those the Surrealists of to-day may be said to have popularized and his interpretation of appearances is often akin to theirs. To affirm, as Proust does, that by the juxtaposition of two different objects, by the establishment of a bond of union between them so that they are freed from the contingencies of time, an artist may extract their essential significance, is to make a characteristically Surrealist claim. Dreams, Proust further discovers, provide fertile examples of such juxtapositions; he determines to be attentive to this nocturnal muse. Logical unity in a work of art he also rejects; he recognizes a vital unity in great works of art, but considers it to be an automatic attribute the value of which may not dawn upon the artist until his task is approaching completion. Metaphor and simile are less the instruments of style than real features of the objects which inspire them; Giotto's angels in the Arena Chapel he conceives as 'les volatiles d'une espèce particulière' which must have been listed in the Natural Histories of biblical and apostolic times. He values things for the sum of associations they may offer; his pianola, for instance, is a 'lanterne magique, scientifique (historique et géographique)'. He loves the great painters of the past not for their draughtsmanship or colour but because the mysterious courtisans of Carpaccio or Rembrandt's Bathsheba are absolutely original figures from a world existing in their author's mind and not elsewhere, the expression of which makes possible a 'communication des âmes' such as Marcel felt to have been effected as he listened to Vinteuil's quartet. Without pausing to examine in detail the *intellectual* truths which Proust evolved from his conscious memory and which are embodied in his vast story of the society and individuals amongst whom Marcel moved, we can say that Proust's observation of his characters was also touched by surrealism; they develop in a

surprising and hazardous manner, are linked by fantastic coincidences, each has a hundred masks, a vital but never a logical unity; they are multiple images and are the more persuasively alive inasmuch as Proust succeeds in establishing a sort of irrational but inevitable relationship between the various inconsistent aspects they assume, a relationship which is convincing because the characters are composed without reference to other data than those provided by Proust's personal impressions; their unity is that of Proust's, of a single individual's, private vision. They can have their original 'being elsewhere no more than Carpaccio's courtisans, Elstir's roses or Rembrandt's old women can have taken shape outside the painters' imagination. It is the quality of art to prolong their existence in responsive minds; and in this sense art may be considered a superior language whereby what is essential and essentially valuable in a personality—a Ruskinian conception—may be communicated to others; and only in this sense may it cease to be true that '*l'homme est l'être qui ne peut sortir de soi, qui ne connaît les autres qu'en soi*'. Thus, since Proust's characters are created from a sum of personal impressions, we find that, where his emotions are strongly engaged, such impressions become so blurred in the dark room of his affections that the characters no longer have any recognizable human attributes. Marcel's unhappy love for Albertine so profoundly modifies his perception of her as a human being that she never properly emerges in this form. We are led to think of her as a winged, amphibian creature, an impalpable, magic essence or simply as a self-generating agony of mind. When he caressed her it was as if he was handling '*une pierre qui enferme la saline des océans immémoriaux ou le rayon d'une étoile*', as if her bodily presence was the closed envelope of a being holding limitless horizons mysteriously within itself. It was not the possession of her physical attractions or even of the charm of her personality that he sought so urgently and vainly, but rather the tones of that music only to be heard in the silence of the blood when 'all the pulses in their multitude image the trembling calm of summer seas.' She was, indeed, so entirely the creature of his dolorous fantasy, it was so fortuitously that his anguished desires had settled upon her that Proust could not truthfully present her to his readers in any other manner; her portrait, a surrealist one, appears to be the manifestation of a neurosis.

The figure of Elstir is clearly inadequate as the exponent of Proust's aesthetic 'doctrines' as they finally emerge. We cannot doubt that he was an impressionist painter, but we can deny that the aesthetic doctrine of the impressionists accorded in any way with Proust's most earnest feelings on this subject. One is bound to regret the revelations the reader would surely have enjoyed, if the art of Elstir had been composed not of fragments chiefly from Monet and from Degas and Renoir, but, instead, from Picasso, Klee, Chagall and Ernst. His conception of the springs of beauty must be considered as nourished upon Ruskin from whose voluminous meditations, from whose enthusiasms and aversions may be extracted a pervasive opinion that art is the language of the imagination, an opinion which took root in Proust's mind and which, under the light of his own imaginative experience, grew to embrace an automatic psychological symbolism (related to surrealism), by means of which imaginative truths were conveyed to him; though he by no means despised the unaided workings of the intellect, his admiration of these was qualified by his knowledge that inspiration was too spasmodic to support alone the task he had set himself. But inspiration, as he conceived it, however elusive, remained the fountain of beauty and there was a duty to pursue it far into the heart. Without necessarily accepting the spontaneous visions of the imagination as absolutely true, we may well question the integrity of any conscious art which sets forth to be the impartial historian of the times, the organ of a social or political ideal or simply to make an honest record of the nature which confronts it. It is misleading to pursue beauty or its enjoyment as providing an attractive means of achieving some practical end. The propagandist and the realist have no satisfactions or consolations to offer; too often they merely add to the petty dust with which we are daily choked. The gift they possess is at the mercy of circumstances, they cannot exercise it with complete liberty—disadvantages under which the life of the imagination does not suffer, whose pleasures are largely in memory and whose ambitions are above the violent distractions of human movements. During the last war, Proust noted that '*ceux qui se sont faits une vie intérieure ambiante ont peu d'égard à l'importance des évènements*'. He would not now hold the same view, yet the intermittent lights of the imagination remain a source of inspiration and solace under whose beams the

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weight of unintelligible events is lightened; they will always provide the surest material for a work of art. Proust remarks, in this connection, how a soft wind laden with the scent of mignonette or, on another occasion, a bird singing in the Parc de Montboissier, because they touch a chord in Chateaubriand's memory, inspire pages in the *Memoires d'Outre-Tombe* of greater beauty than any dealing with the great occurrences of the Revolution and the Empire. We should cultivate those moments when the visible scene takes possession of us unawares, when silent harmonies, nursed by our memory, suddenly sound regardless of the external conditions in which we find ourselves; they are intimations of a timeless reality within us in contact with which 'we have sight'. Proust might have claimed, 'of that immortal sea which brought us hither' and birth and death are of no consequence; Proust's imaginative processes are indeed curiously related to those sublimations of memory which flashed upon Wordsworth's inner eye in solitude. He might have described them in Wordsworth's words as creating a state in which

' . . . the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul.'

It is out of such mysterious situations, that is to say, from inspiration, that great art is evolved, and it is in the revelation of the artist's sense of beatitude, of the features of the transfigured, super-real world thus disclosed—the image exclusively of the core of his personality—that his genius and our delight in it reside.

This essay is the first of a series of revaluations of great artists which will include *Baudelaire* by Martin Turnell, *Balzac* by Raymond Mortimer, *Henry James* by Logan Pearsall Smith, *Beardsley* by A. J. A. Symons, and *Finnegan's Wake* by Frank Budgen.

## HUGH KINGSMILL

# J. M. BARRIE

IN the course of his rectorial address at St. Andrews, Barrie said: 'Don't put your photographs at all ages into your autobiography. That is a tragic mistake. My Life; and What I have Done With It. That is the sort of title, but it is the photographs that give away what you have done with it. Grim things these portraits; if you could read the language of them you would often find it unnecessary to read the book.'

Barrie's latest photographs—I remember one of him at Kirriemuir, which he had visited in connection with some Barrie celebration—show extreme wretchedness; but even in his early forties there is no trace of happiness in his face. Mr. Denis Mackail gives an excellent photograph of him at this time, as a frontispiece to his biography (*The Story of J. M. B. A Biography* by Denis Mackail. Peter Davies. 11s. 6d.). In spite of a high forehead and fine eyes, and a general delicacy of structure which indicates unusual intelligence and sensibility, the total effect is chilling. It is a hard resentful face, the face of someone whose sympathy and tenderness are turned in on himself, and for whom other people exist only as ministers to his own self-love and self-pity. There are as many kinds of egotism as of human beings. Barrie's was the most insistent and pervasive of all, the kind which is found only in those whom the Victorians called 'mother's darlings', and who are nowadays said to be suffering from a mother-complex.

What Barrie and his mother were really like together must be a matter of conjecture. He has portrayed her in *Margaret Ogilvy*, where he pictures himself, after the death of a brother, trying to comfort his mother by standing on his head. 'I suppose I was an odd little figure. I have been told that my anxiety to brighten her gave my face a strained look . . . but she did laugh suddenly now and then, whereupon I screamed exultingly to that dear sister who was ever waiting to come and see the sight, but by the time she came the dear face was wet again.' Clearly the reality of Kirriemuir is not here. David Barrie, James's father, was a working-man, he had a large family, and his wife's favourite child was James, in whom she recognized talents through which

she would be able to enjoy, if only vicariously, a better life than she had known as the wife of a poor Scotch weaver. Beneath the surface of *Margaret Ogilvy* one is conscious of the implacable self-love which mother and son pooled for their mutual benefit, to the dumb discomfiture of the father.

Spoilt children get on quickly in the world, for most people conform to the attitude expected of them; and the child who is given what he cries for at six will usually be given what he asks for at thirty. In his middle twenties Barrie was already doing well as a journalist in London, and two or three years later, having by this time mastered the technique of presenting Kirriemuir to southern readers, he became famous with *A Window in Thrums*, of which *Punch* wrote:

Let pessimists potter and pule, and let savages slaughter and  
harry:

Give me Hendry and Tammas and Jess, and a smile and a tear  
born of Barrie.

But however quickly fame and money had come to Barrie, they would have come too slowly to escape his bitterness at their delay. The most revealing of his works, one which in later years he did his best to keep out of the way of possible readers, is *Better Dead*, a satirical fantasy written in 1886, when he was still unknown, except to the editors who were looking after him. It is the story of a young Scot, Andrew Riach, who, leaving his native place, Wheens, and its imbecile or depraved inhabitants, comes to London, where finding it impossible to earn money honestly, he scrapes along by lending himself to petty devices for boosting actors, papers and so on. His nausea at life grows, he jabs at passers-by in the streets, and reproves a mother for shrieking when her child slips from her arms to the pavement. Then he meets the President of a Society for Doing Without Some People, the aim of which is to assassinate the chief public figures of the day, Rosebery, Randolph Churchill, Chamberlain, Stead, Bradlaugh and many others. Andrew becomes an enthusiastic member, pleads for the inclusion of the leading writers, Tennyson, Browning and Ruskin, and goes on to urge that no one over forty-five should be spared. Andrew, however, has a neck which appeals to the strangling impulses in the President, and the story ends with Andrew's flight, and return to Wheens, where we leave

him married to one of the more imbecile natives, and regarding his two children with a strong desire to crack their skulls together.

*Better Dead* corresponds in Barrie's work to *The Voyage to the Houyhnhnms* in Swift's, but it contains no sage horses and honest enduring Gulliver to balance the Yahoos. It must have been obvious to Barrie that if he was to live and prosper, there was nothing for it but to deal very drastically with his Yahoos, scrapping most of them and disguising the rest in fancy costumes. For day-dreaming he had a natural aptitude, and henceforth he called upon this faculty to provide the sugar coating for his pills. Much of this falsification was deliberate; he was resolved to be famous and wealthy, and thought the public deserved to be given what it was contemptible enough to desire. But his day dreams were also for his own consolation. As Mr. Mackail points out, Barrie was always dramatising himself, playing some part which he hoped would charm, impress or intimidate others, as the occasion required. Once, for example, feeling that he had been badly treated by his producer, Frohman, Barrie, to quote Mr. Mackail, 'drifted off towards stoicism or simulated indifference—and examining himself again saw that they weren't altogether unbecoming. They made him more mysterious and baffling to the onlookers. He liked that. It put them, however tall they were, at an unmistakable disadvantage. This had always been one of his best parts.'

His first experiments in sweetening his experience for public consumption were relatively mild, and one of them, *My Lady Nicotine*, was a delightful book, which has the same place in Barrie's work as *The Pickwick Papers* in Dickens's. Each was written when its author was just becoming famous, and each has a lightness of heart not felt before or after. There is, of course, no comparison in comic genius, but Barrie's group of journalists, bound together by a common love for the Arcadia smoking mixture, play their parts very amusingly in what Barrie might have called Butterfly Street, for that it was the real Grub Street he would hardly at that date have had the hardihood to maintain. Thirty years later, in his rectorial address on Courage, his powers of make-believe had become equal to anything. This is how he pictures his entry into Fleet Street, where during his first year he earned three hundred pounds—'The greatest glory that has ever come to me was to be swallowed up in London, not knowing a

soul, with no means of subsistence, and the fun of working till the stars went out. To have known anything would have spoilt it. I didn't even quite know the language. I rang for my boots and they thought I said a glass of water, so I drank the water and worked on. There was no food in the cupboard, so I didn't need to waste time in eating. . . . Oh, to be a freelance of journalism again—that darling jade! Those were days. Too good to last.'

In the middle nineties, while he was still working the Kirriemuir mine, two Free Church ministers, Ian Maclaren and S. R. Crockett, came forward with their own samples of Scotch humour and pathos. Maclaren's *Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush* had a sale of three quarters of a million, and Crockett's *The Stickit Minister*, which was quickly followed by two more best-sellers, enabled Crockett to leave the ministry. Apart from a reasonable annoyance at having his market invaded, Barrie must have felt the complicated chagrin of a man who sees a fake article of his own invention successfully imitated. Later he was to have the same experience with *Peter Pan*; but if the public didn't mind who Peter Pandered to them, what could he do? Useless to warn them that his fakes were the only genuine ones, that was a nuance beyond their understanding.

He had, however, the satisfaction of leaving Scotland on Maclaren and Crockett's hands, after George Douglas had blown Scotch sentiment off the best-selling map in *The House with the Green Shutters*. By 1902 Barrie had two plays, neither on Scotch themes, running simultaneously, *Quality Street* and *The Admirable Crichton*. The first ran for fourteen months, the second for ten.

The mood of the prosperous classes in the decade of Barrie's stage triumphs was uncomfortable and apprehensive. The nineteenth century was over, and they were waiting for the bill to be presented. The poor were dissatisfied, women were dissatisfied, and with each year it became more obvious that Germany was dissatisfied, too. It was no longer possible to dismiss unpleasant problems in the brusque Victorian fashion as 'matters better left undiscussed'. But there was room for someone who could lighten doubts and tremors with humour, or ease them into tears. This was Barrie's cue, though it must be admitted that in *The Admirable Crichton* he took risks which no skill less accomplished than his could have prevented from wrecking the play as a popular success. Most people know the story. A yachtful of aristocrats is wrecked

on a desert island, and the butler, Crichton, the only man among a number of males, takes charge, becomes the master of the island, and signifies his intention to make the earl's daughter his wife. The party is rescued, the butler steps down of his own free will from the autocracy he had enjoyed, and the play ends with him back in his old job. Among the men, apart from Crichton, there is not one who is not either an imbecile or a coward, or both. Yet the stalls followed this democratic manifesto without a murmur. Barrie, who is reported to have said that the stalls wouldn't stand an ending in which Crichton was still the master, knew that they would not identify themselves with the particular wasters on the stage, and that so long as the social system was turned right side up again at the close they would find nothing to complain about. But to be on the safe side, he made Crichton himself rebuke the Earl's daughter for saying that there must be something wrong with England, when the best man on an island had to be a servant at home. 'My lady, not even from you can I listen to a word against England'.

An additional safeguard was the relatively flattering picture of the aristocratic women. In Barrie, as in Shaw, the women have very much the best of it. Shaw's *Candida*, and Maggie in *What Every Woman Knows*, are the Edwardian wife as she liked to imagine herself, and as the Edwardian husband, sitting beside her in the stalls or dress circle, was willing, for the sake of domestic harmony, to concede her to be—no Victorian doll or angel in the house, but shrewd, humorous, realistic, infinitely tolerant of the vanities and follies of the big baby, her husband, always allowing him his own way, and always seeing to it that his way was also hers.

Another symptom of the age, one much nearer to the centre of Barrie's nature than any form of feminine or democratic aspiration, was the longing to escape, back to childhood or to any far off region, actual or imaginary, an island in the South Seas, a Wellsian Utopia, no matter what, so long as it was distant and different. In *Peter Pan* Barrie made his most successful; and, for the light it throws both on Barrie and his age, his most interesting contribution to this need. The play opens in a nursery in a London middle-class home. There are three children, the eldest being a girl, Wendy; there are the father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Darling; and there is a nurse, who is a Newfoundland dog. Peter Pan,

a kind of changeling, arrives from The Never-Never Land, an island with a lagoon where mermaids bask. He spirits the children away to this island, there are adventures with a gang of pirates, who are finally massacred by Peter Pan and his devoted band, and the play ends with the return of the children to their London home, where Mr. Darling has taken up his quarters permanently in the kennel of the Newfoundland dog. Mrs. Darling offers to adopt Peter Pan, but he refuses. 'I want always to be a little boy and to have fun', he says.

It is a whimsical production, not only in the current sense, but in the original sense of arbitrary and capricious—a fantasy written by as well as about a spoilt child. Barrie had a dog he was fond of, so the nurse has to be a dog. At times, no doubt, he wished he could change places with his dog, so he puts Mr. Darling into a kennel. The play is on this level throughout; there is not a breath of fresh air, not a natural or beautiful moment in the whole concoction. Every effect is a stage effect, designed with the audience in mind, as in the notorious close of Act IV—'She says—she says she thinks she could get well again if children believed in fairies!' (*He rises and throws out his arms he knows not to whom perhaps to the boys and girls of whom he is not one.*) 'Do you believe in fairies? Say quick that you believe! If you believe, clap your hands!'

Such was the fare offered to Edwardian children, and approved by Edwardian parents. A hundred years had passed since *The Fairchild Family*, with its hell for spoilt children and its strict prudential morality. Surfeited with Mammon, the world was beginning to pine for Mars, without knowing it, at least in England. 'I want always to be a little boy and to have fun' sounded rather pretty and touching in 1904, and every one was captivated by Peter's gallant duel with the pirate chief, and applauded the reeking swords of his boy followers. Since then there has been a plethora of little boys who want to have fun, and now even such an adult as Mr. Fairchild would be a relief after the Peter Pan of Berchtesgaden.

Wendy loves the fearless, fascinating Peter, but Peter cares only for himself. That Barrie saw himself as Peter, and was on the whole gratified by the sight, is clear throughout the play, but at the close the pretences beneath which he tries to hide his bewilderment and unhappiness dissolve, though only for a moment.

Wendy tries to embrace Peter, and Peter draws back. 'It has something to do with the riddle of his being' Barrie explains in a stage direction, and, referring to Peter's earlier cry 'To die will be an awfully big adventure,' continues, 'If he could get the hang of the thing his cry might become, " To live would be an awfully big adventure!" but he can never quite get the hang of it, and so no one is as gay as he.'

The taste for Barrie's Never-Never Lands lasted till the end of the Great War, and in *Dear Brutus* and *Mary Rose* he provided audiences which had found Mars no more satisfying than Mammon with other worldly fare light enough for their state of acute spiritual dyspepsia. Meanwhile he was becoming increasingly wretched. For many years after *Peter Pan* his annual income was between thirty and forty thousand pounds, and as he saw more of the upper classes his feeling against them became transformed into an equally strong feeling in their favour. Having adopted the sons of an old friend, he sent them to Eton. 'Your great English public schools—I never feel myself a foreigner in England except when trying to understand them,' he said in a speech. ' . . . I am like a dog looking up wistfully at its owner, wondering what that noble face means, or if it does have a meaning.' Each year, Mr. Mackail writes, he continued to expand 'his contacts with the big names in politics and any number of the more decorative names in society'; and when Lady Cynthia Asquith became his private secretary, it gave him, according to Mr. Mackail, enormous and lasting pleasure to think that his secretary was the daughter of an earl. There is a poignant comment on all this in his diary, when he was sixty-two—'It is as if long after writing "P. Pan" its true meaning came to me. Desperate attempts to grow up but can't.'

More than ten years after this entry, he tried with another *Peter Pan* to recapture the public favour he had now lost; but *The Boy David*, with Elisabeth Bergner as David, was not what the public needed at the close of December 1936. The Abdication had just taken place, the Crystal Palace was in ruins, the shadow of Hitler was rising behind the still formidable substance of Mussolini, and England was feeling in a very bad way. But though confused and uncertain about nearly everything, she most decidedly did not think she could get well again if children believed in fairies.

ROGER ROUGHTON

## THE HUMAN HOUSE

'IT is impudent, it is impertinent in the young to try to teach their fellows and elders', said the young man. It had grown so dark in his big room that we could not see his features at all; probably this only made it easier for him to speak.

'It is impertinent in us,' he went on, 'but there are times when it may be allowed. We listen to our elders because of their experience, and also perhaps because of their nearness to death; but to-day the toothless baby is as near to death as the toothless crone. And experience of some sort, of a bitter sort, is all too common to most of us (and it has always been so); nevertheless if we speak to you, it must be only with perfect humility, with anything less than that it would be better not to speak at all. Above all it is essential to stamp out any trace of the "prig", for this mean, inaccurate creature is rightly more condemned than the whirling villain. Can it be done? I am fearful: too great consciousness, or rather seemingly too great consciousness of our own displays is one of the faults of our own age.'

'To me an idea seems like an omelette. In my head, in my frying-pan, I know there is a fine omelette. And I am desperately anxious to serve it unbroken before you; and not only unbroken, but perfectly cooked, elegantly displayed; elegance has its place, of course, food elegantly served tastes better, I said I know it is a fine omelette: that is, I know the eggs were first-rate, I also feel their cooking, their blending, was good; but equally I know that I shall fail in the serving, the omelette will be mutilated. I should like to wait thirty or forty years before trying such a delicate operation, but it is already growing late, it is quite dark.'

'First, live only by love. Oh, don't misunderstand those words at all; don't confuse love with any of its substitutes, which turn sour because they are adulterated. No, do not deceive yourselves, nothing less than absolute truth and absolute honesty will satisfy. It is certain that there is no life but this life, and there are no forces but natural forces; it is probable that the mind is purely a physical mind.'

'There can be no dispute about it, the thought of death is the most poignant thought on earth. And the first to realize the mortality of man must have felt an icy and almost intolerable loneliness close to madness. Yet in a sense that first doubter sowed a tiny seed of doubt in the mind of every living person. Was there ever a time when there was no doubter?

'Does the acceptor of mortality suffer more than the believer in a second life? As a child I did not believe in a second life, I simply disbelieved in my own death: a child is the centre of the world, it is very, very hard for him to believe in death. And to-day we have taught millions of children to believe in death before we have taught them to read the shining future. We have taught them by our war; and this is one of our greatest crimes, even if it were the only crime we had ever committed it would still be too much for any one of us singly to bear.

'The acceptor then will not suffer more, unless his knowledge stops short at that negative point. For there is an immortality, the immortality of the physical world.

'Belief in mortality and disbelief in the supernatural came to me side by side, as they will to most. But this meant no sorrow at all: the supernatural has an overwhelming rival in the natural; better than the superhuman is the human.

'Shun mysticism. There are no short cuts to love, though there are paths treacherously so signposted. Mysticism is pipe-dreaming, at the worst it kills sense, at the best "it doesn't do much harm." But better not to live at all, than be content to stand aside; if once you try to take no part, unanswerable logic will drive you back into the forest; and there, when your pince-nez is broken, you will knock your head against the trees.

'The human mind is probably entirely physical (I would say "certainly", I am as certain as I can be, but to anticipate knowledge is suspicious!). The first feeling at this thought is not poignant but indignant: "What nineteenth century nonsense!" people cry, "what crude materialism, what outmoded mechanistic cant!" This indignation is only possible if you despise nature. But to me this "theory", seems on the contrary not to debase the mind, but to lift up the body. At the thought of it the human race, all nature, all the physical world, seems still a million times more wonderful.

'But this is for others to discuss, with learning. For myself I feel sure it is so; but whether it is so or not, makes not a scrap

of difference to the need for love. If in the crudest sense every emotion, every creative feeling, every flight of fancy, could be controlled by electric switches, the moral code would remain exactly as all-important as it always has been. Because not only the mental, but *the moral and the physical are one*.

'This is no new idea, of course; thousands felt towards it in the last century; but to too many it was actually distorted into its opposite, it took on a cruel and destructive face, it became "everything is lawful". But this is the same pit that its opponents fall into, it is only the contempt for nature once again.' Here the young man paused: at times it was hard for us to hear all that he said, there was such a constant noise blowing up from the street. After a time he went on, speaking hurriedly:

'There are a million million years ahead of us, but it may be that I have only five minutes left to speak.

'Remember there are a hundred counterfeits to every one true coin in circulation to-day; there is even a story that it is not love we wish to live by, but hate; we can laugh at that, already two hundred million can disprove it by their lives. Avoid those who speak of indiscriminate love; they are counterfeit, and you will find them, at the very moment when real love stands up, to be the most insensate haters. Only those who hate evil know how to love.

'There is only inferiority, there is no superiority to mankind. The higher you reach the closer you will come to the heart of mankind. Lenin and his great successor are in their very greatness bound tight to the human heart. The great writers, the painters, the composers, the builders, the scientists are bound thereby their courageous love and their understanding love. Realism is the highest point in the world.

'Cowardice then will cut you off from the rest, and so will idleness: to work is natural. We have to be very careful in using these general terms, they have been abused so often that all have grown suspicious. Peace and plenty, we cry, and have heard our own words so often that we hardly realize their meaning. But we shall have not only freedom from fighting each other (how ridiculous it will soon seem that so negative a blessing needed to be mentioned), we shall have peace in our life, where none may take from another (that is the first peace), and peace, coming more slowly, from disease, until perhaps we shall even have peace from death. And the plenty will be infinitely more than plenty of food

and comfort, good though that is; above all it will be plenty for the mind. Again and again it is the same thing, ultimately all is inseparately bound up together.

'But we can begin to read the future in the past and present; never despise the past: look on it in admiration and humility, learn from it; learn from its faults, naturally, but above all learn from its achievements, which are far greater.

'Remember this, we shall build up whole new worlds of joy; we shall strip truth bare in all her perfection, the giving and taking of pleasure, the satisfaction of desire will be raised to an incredible pitch; but we may never express one particular piece of truth more absolutely than, for instance, it was sung in a country song a thousand years ago. The past is permanent, there is no break, only transformation.

'And so with the dark present: Many will die evil, think of the sorrow of that. But think also of the multitudes of good and innocent around us. I think of one who for more than thirty years has been fighting for our future; to-day he is locked in a cell for his goodness.

'For a long time I have distrusted those among us whose outlook is wholly emotional; I distrust them still. But never let your distrust of false emotion stifle true emotion. Lack of emotion, though, is not a vice, it is a terrible disease. Look with infinite pity on those who are cursed by it, help them if you can.

'Cowardice, laziness, lack of love, all vices and diseases cut us off from the rest of the world. But equally their opposites bind us close again. My cowardice and weakness are such that my whole life has been a denial of all that I know to be good; and at the darkest times I turn away and drink myself insensible, until the sky turns green. But at another time I can remember that none can be completely cut off: like all but a handful, I have been loved, and I have loved, and no matter whatever else has happened and may happen, that is there so that nothing can change it.

'You will hardly expect a solution of every sorrow overnight: chagrin, irritation, unreturned love, jealousy, cooling of feeling, a hundred others will remain for long. I cannot imagine loving without jealousy, I should hate to be loved without jealousy. But you know that already the joys of loving are worth more than all its miseries.

'But I have still something else to say to you. Give more

thought to the children. Because we are so much concerned, as we must be, with day to day work, because we must give consideration to what to do this morning or this afternoon, we have too much left the children to the martinets and the quacks; we have left them to those who would thrash them and those who would coddle them. And this is a crime.

'It is no coincidence that the most perfect love produces the most astonishing creature, the human child. I said before that the young might, in humility, dare to teach their elders to-day because they too stand close to death and have grown old before their time. But there is a further reason too: the young stand closer to innocence. It is not that childhood is inspired, but to-day, when so much evil is taught us by our powerful handful of enemies, too many are confused until they die. An articulate babe would topple empires.

'For these reasons, which is to say again for love, put the lives of children before all other lives. Never forget your childhood: we do not remember easily, too much happens every hour, our childhood becomes a jumble of pictures. But you *must* remember, you are worthless if you do not remember, if you cause your child to suffer as you yourself suffered.

'You must excuse me, I am bitter in these thoughts. Perhaps you did not suffer as children, or no more than in the soft tumbles and quick quarrels which leave no mark. But many do suffer, often no doubt for foolish reasons: but no one may judge a child. As I said, if a grown person says he is misunderstood, then probably the fault is his own; but if a child cries that it is misunderstood, then a crime has been done.

'But do not imagine that there is any easy answer; there is no cut-and-dried plan. "If you treat children in this manner all will be happy"; no, this is the hardest work of all, it is a terrible work in your hands that has to be done; and yet it is not a terrible work, only a terrible trust. At times children may seem to you half foreigners and half animals, but always they are ourselves. What help can we give? Children are often cruel, of course, and not only passionately so but coldly and calculatingly cruel; yet they are above all possessed by justice. When you are passing judgment on a child, imagine that the charge is murder, give him every conceivable benefit. Yet at the same time your judgment must be in the lightest manner, and given with infallible speed.

'Anything less than complete love is useless. A child is naturally capable of unbounded, constant love; it is impossible for him not to love. A child is full of wild, illogical, ridiculous, curious love: a five-year-old child can treasure the butcher's boy or the postmistress above all the rest of the world. But he does not always return the most devoted affection: if there is any falseness in it, even though the falseness is unknown to the giver, if it lacks understanding, the child will turn from it.

'But because of his hatred of injustice a child likes deserved severity, or I should say it leaves him with no lasting resentment. Rewards and punishments naturally have their place. Flatter children: a child loves flattery, within reason it will do him no harm, he may even later live up to the undeserved praise. Conceal nothing from a child; even while saying or doing the most cruel things a child is still ultimately innocent, he is incorruptible. Or rather he can be corrupted, but the corruption does not last, it will not last unless he is corrupted again and again. Never frighten a child; but do not try to save him from fear, you will not be able to. A child may be frightened by a hideous accident, but he is just as likely to be frightened by a fairy story. Try to give him protection against fear, try to make him put fear in its proper place—(it was not for nothing that I said this would be a terrible work for you).

'Laugh with a child if possible, and not at it. Blind love will make a child callous, at least to the giver. If you are a man I can say this to you: treat children somewhat as you treat the young wife or girl who shares your bed; be loving, be strict, be attentive, teach, laugh together, demand the highest, behave as an equal and yet actually as a better, be tolerant in small matters and inflexible in large; above all so live that you are respected. But if you are not first loved you will be able to do nothing.

'Of course the lot of children will be almost automatically improved a thousand times in our new world. But I say this to you, do not be content with this "almost automatic" improvement; do not leave the fate of children to the experts only; accelerate this improvement, let every single one give constant thought to the children, let each do all he can for them, and more: to do less is criminal.' The young man broke off for a minute; now the noise in the street had grown more violent than ever before, so that he had always to speak in a high voice.

'But it is not only in love for young women, for children and for laughter that we feel ourselves back in the heart of humanity; I am thinking also of books, of the countryside, of eating and drinking, of gambling, of painting, of music, of flying, of plays, of games, of all the things I find good. Love all these, and more. And if you are well, think often of that. Keep as close to country life as you can, at least know more of it than the unfortunates like myself who are outside looking in. Many have to leave it altogether; do not exaggerate this harm, remember in this respect we are taking one step back, but in order to go a million forward.

'Gamble, and drink, certainly, get drunk sometimes too: only do not drink "tragically", do it joyously; and do not be weakened by it, if it weakens you, turn to something else.

'But above all honour those who give us our music, our pictures and books. Each man may do one thing: the ugly youth may thrill millions with his football, the figure of fun may be a national hero with his fiddle. Do not give the thinkers more than their due, but still honour them as they deserve. Remember that a thousand miles away, in the capital of our future, the people stand in three great groups, bound together for ever; those who work in the town, those who work on the land, and those who work in the mind. Each has something of the others, they will finally coalesce.

'I myself do give the thinkers more than their due, I cannot help it; it is the ecstacy I thank and love them for. Each man understands many parts of truth in his life, but honour these because they have been articulate, they have been able to give their truth to everyone. And the revelation of truth is always ecstatic. This is true of the revelation of scientific truth too, in another way; honour the birdwatcher then and the stargazer, honour the healers. But for me, I say, it is to honour above all the writers; and even greater will come, I am sure of it. Honour best whom you wish, but honour all.

'Lately many "thinkers" have turned aside and stand apart from their fellows: this is a sad thing, but think little of it, it is shortlived; their successors will grow up among us and will remain among us, to engrave our ecstacies for ever.

'It is growing late, my time is up, I can hardly make myself heard above this roar of terror and sorrow. If only I could have had another twenty years, another ten, another five. But it

may be ten years even till to-morrow morning. What a morning it will be. But I cannot live through that long night. Listen, my friends, my end may be shameful, perhaps ludicrous, but . . . but what? I can't go on. . . .

'I have failed. My poor "omelette" is unrecognizable. I have left a million things unsaid; in what I have said I have disfigured my own meaning by my tone of voice. It has been just "another story"—How could I have dared to imagine for a moment that I could express one single ecstasy to you; how could I hope it in all my ignorance, my sloth, my cowardice, my inarticulate disgrace?

'But I am still left with the joys that all have had; I have loved and been loved, I know the ecstacies of actual living, I know those moments when it is possible to see truth "in a flash". And I have my "thousands of images", perhaps even more fantastically coloured and jumbled than usual, certainly more undisciplined! All have those, confusing us even as they move us, the thousands of sights and images, chaotically jostling every second round our heads; even those alone can be almost enough'. The young man stood up suddenly and walked over to the window; he stayed there for a minute, looking out into the darkness and listening to the ringing waves of noise. Then he turned to us again.

'I am a sinner . . .' he said. 'What a tiny step it is to have realized the need for inflexible morals, what a tiny step as long as one remains without them. How did I dare to claim credit for that step? . . .

'My own and dearest friends, always aim at the impossible—though you are saints and I have nothing to teach you—never be satisfied: that is love, and the secret of life.' The young man stopped; then he turned away, to run for ever from the room. And the ecstatic human house went spinning on its wheel.

# CATHERINE ANDRASSY

## THE THEORY OF JUSTICE

FOR those who want to understand the psychological reasons and the background of the famous Russian Trials, the incomprehensible attitude of self-abasement, the fantastic admissions to vile and treacherous acts which the accused had never committed, and who are eager to acquire a deeper knowledge of present-day Russia, it is indispensable to read Koestler's brilliant novel *Darkness at Noon* (Cape). But those must also read it who want to sense the chief moral issues of the present war, what we are fighting against, and what values are at stake.

Rubasoff, a high official of the Soviet Republic, has been arrested by the G.P.U. He had been already arrested in the past for having strayed from the party line. This time he knows it is final. With the ardent faith of the reformer and militant philosopher, he has helped to build up the new Russia, and making a 'totalitarian' sacrifice of his own personality, had followed for many years the creed that the party is sacrosanct, and no criticism, even inside it, is admissible. For the sake of 'saving the Revolution, the Bastion of Socialism', he adopts the principle 'the end justifies the means'—all means without exception—that truth and freedom are meaningless if they do not serve the benefit of the community, which at the present stage is the Proletarian State. What the interest of the Proletarian State is, is established by its autocratic Leader, the infallible Master; the great No. 1. Results alone are important, intentions irrelevant. For many years he had, if not adopted, silently accepted that new catechism of false information and twisted statistics, of total disregard and contempt for the masses (one only lies to those one despises), of slavish worship and unrivalled sycophancy. Their excuse, his excuse, had always been the results anticipated. But the question arises in him: Can results ever be satisfactory when the masses, through the prolonged use of violence, have become deaf and dumb again; and can only give satisfaction to the lust of power and the vanity of a megalomaniac? Rubasoff, the student, the intellectual *par excellence*, could not continue to follow the uncritical sheeplike

herd who prefer to load on an infallible Pope the responsibility of their weakness and cowardice. Intellectually honest, he has to raise the question, 'Isn't the equation wrong? (In life one can't follow the abstract uninquisitiveness of the mathematician, who goes on operating his equation without knowing for what the  $x$  stands.) The statesman who works for the welfare of the masses ought first to know the nature of those masses. The  $x$  stands for that unknown quantity, therefore the calculation went wrong.' The basic instincts of human nature can't be violated for long successfully. The people who had awakened for a short time have again been put to sleep with the help of narcotic catchwords. The masses have again been betrayed. The changed social conditions have not raised their standard, for the means employed to realize these social conditions were so drastic that they stifled any form of development. Instead of trying to raise in them respect for the human being, they made use of their superstitious and credulous natures to increase the State's authority, giving them new superstitions, new creeds, as incomprehensible and mystical as those of the orthodox Church. The drive of the backward masses under the rattle of machine-guns, towards forced mechanised civilization *à l'américain*, creates disharmony which cannot engender anything worth while, but will ultimately lead to reaction. As no human being can free himself entirely from his mental and spiritual inheritance which is his by tradition, environment, family, upbringing, the force of Rubasoff's ethics, which had made him fight Tsarism in the past, his sense of justice and civic courage rise in him once more when he realizes that the means used for securing the end, were just those means which had had the effect of pushing back the masses into the same mental darkness and barbarism from which he had tried to deliver them. Slowly the realization dawns on him that the path the Revolution had adopted could never lead towards a higher moral consciousness, without which no human progress can be achieved. But to fight tyranny, oppression, injustice and misery was even harder now than in the days of the Tsar.

Vague preliminary plans—rather talks—between malcontent elements and a foreign diplomat, half thoughts, half expressed, get back in a mysterious way to the authorities. It seems to have been a valuable service the foreign diplomat rendered to his potential ally, from whose internal regime he has no more fear. Rubasoff

is arrested. No. 1's Intelligence Service proves more efficient than that of the Romanoffs.

The three hearings are masterful descriptions of the fundamental moral divergencies of our epoch. The party spokesman Ivanoff puts the problem in the following way: 'There are only two conceptions of human ethics and they are at opposite poles. One of them is Christian and humane and declares the individual to be sacrosanct, and asserts that the rules of arithmetic are not to be applied to human units. The other starts from the basic principle that a collective aim justifies all means, and not only allows but demands that individuals should in every way be subordinate and sacrificed to the community, which may dispose of them as an experimental rabbit or a sacrificial lamb. The first conception would be called antivivisection morality, the second vivisection morality.'

Isn't this the parallel to the Nazi propagandists, who say that there is no crime if it can help the fatherland?

Ivanoff, who endeavours to be the model of the modern man, describes him as follows: 'He reads Machiavelli (we could add Spengler for the Nazis), Ignatius de Loyola, Marx and Hegel; he is cold and unmerciful to mankind, but of a kind of mathematical mercifulness. He is damned always to do that which is most repugnant to him; to become a slaughterer in order to abolish slaughtering; to sacrifice lambs so that no more lambs may be slaughtered; to whip people with knouts so that they may learn not to let themselves be whipped; to strip himself of every scruple in the name of higher scrupulousness and challenge the hatred of mankind because of his love for it; an abstract and geometric love.'

A pure Dostoievsky hero, Rubasoff's discussion at his inquest on 'Crime and Punishment', is a classical example of a Russian intellectual's incapacity to rid himself of the moral side of social problems, although theoretically they had long ago discharged all ethical aspects as purely 'bourgeois'. Rubasoff, as well as Raskolnikoff, discovers 'that twice two are not always four when mathematical units are human beings', and that economic reform alone is not enough. Ivanoff jeers at this old-fashioned ideology, and solves it in saying 'Had Raskolnikoff bumped off the old woman at the order of the party, the equation would stand, and the novel with its misleading problem would never have been written, and so much the better for humanity.' Doubts, vacillations, moral problems are contra-revolutionary because they

weaken. Truth is what is useful, falsehood what is harmful. 'One may not regard the world as a sort of metaphysical brothel for emotions. Sympathy, conscience, disgust, despair, repentance and atonement are for us repellent debauchery. The greatest temptation is to renounce violence, to repent, to make peace with oneself. Most great revolutionaries fell before this temptation from Spartacus to Danton and Dostoevsky. They are the classical form of betrayal of the cause. The temptations of God were always more dangerous to mankind than those of Satan. As long as chaos dominates the world, God is an anachronism, and every compromise with one's conscience is perfidy.'

When Ivanoff, having wanted to save Rubasoff, is also liquidated, the mechanized man, Glatkin, who neither loves nor hates, who has grown up in a period of revaluations where motives and intentions are irrelevant and are cast aside with a shrug as romantic and sentimental, takes his place. For Rubasoff the main issue lies in the ultimate freedom of man and in the respect for his personality. Glatkin, who despises mankind, takes and gives orders believing in the infallibility of those who give them. The spiritual disciple of Ignatius de Loyola, he could have been as easily that of Hitler, is accidentally that of Stalin. He got the order to destroy Rubasoff, so the question of innocence or guilt does not exist. With remarkable astuteness he appeals to all those ideas and convictions which for so long had kept Rubasoff in the line of the party, and when the accused reverses to his ethical and intellectual revolutionism, which he lost as well as himself when he followed the lead of the 'Neanderthal' men, and threw it out of the boat as worthless ballast, Glatkin reminds him of arguments used in his own speeches and writings to back up the regime. No escape is possible. He realizes that while emptying out the soiled water of Tsaristic institutions he helped to throw out the new born of the social order. 'The policy of the international had to be subordinated to national Russian policy and those who did not understand this had to be destroyed. Whole sets of the best functionaries in Europe had to be physically liquidated. They crushed their own organizations abroad and co-operated with the police of reactionary countries in order to suppress the revolutionary meetings which came at the wrong moment. They betrayed their friends and compromised with their enemies. Their press and their schools cultivate Chauvinism,

militarism, dogmatism, conformism and ignorance. The arbitrary power of the government is unlimited and unexampled in history. 'The energies of this generation are exhausted, they were spent in the revolution. For this generation is bled white and there is nothing left of it but a moaning, numbed, apathetic lump of sacrificial flesh.' 'I see the flayed body of the generation, but I see no trace of the new skin.' That's how Rubasoff sees it now, but for ten years he had talked the same language as Glatkin, the son of that revolution which Rubasoff had brought to victory and which is now holding him in a steel grip. The starched man whose coming into existence was Rubasoff's greatest crime. 'He who is the flesh of their flesh, grown independent and become insensible.' The Zaurberlehring is master over his creator, for ghosts and convictions can't be cast off if once they have been called to rise.

In the struggle for power the Glatkins will always win, 'for they have no childhood to erase'. Logic is a terrible thing, it can lead to murder if taken too seriously. 'For perhaps it was not suitable for man to think every thought to its logical conclusion. Perhaps it did not suit man to be completely freed from old bonds, from the steadyng brakes of "Thou shalt not" and "Thou mayst not", and to be allowed to tear along straight towards the goal. Perhaps it did not suit mankind to sail without ballast. Perhaps the revolution has come too early, an abortion with monstrous deformed limbs.'

We follow with anguish the duel in which Rubasoff is entangled like a fly in the web of the spider—a web which he had spun himself—the web of his own logic, disillusionment, remorse, fatigue, the torture of sleepless nights, and the glaring light of the electric bulb burning his eyes used to the darkness of his cell. He himself is no more the man he was. He had gone too far, he had made too many concessions, his faith had been too deeply shattered. There is no public to whom he can appeal; there are only the large backward masses to whom he himself has lied and deceived, and who are not strong enough to hear the truth.

Failure is a crime, he had said it often, so the failure of the opposition to bring off a revolution was his. 'The amount of individual freedom which a people may conquer and keep depends on the degree of its political maturity. In periods of maturity it is the duty and the function of the opposition to appeal

to the masses. In periods of mental immaturity only demagogues invoke the higher judgment of the people. In such situations the opposition has two alternatives: to seize the power by a *coup d'état*, or if unsuccessful—die silently.' He should have known that the first was impossible. Crime seeks for punishment; that is Dostoevsky, Russian, Christian. He has to pay. He wants to pay. Where convictions can't be materialized they have to be suppressed and denied. 'Questions of personal pride, prejudice, such as existing elsewhere against certain forms of self-abasement, should be cut off root and branch,' he writes in his diary.

*Darkness at Noon* has the elements of pure Greek tragedy. It lies in the failure of the well-intentioned hero, who can't escape his fate since the tragedy lies in himself. Plisnier's Igor in the *Faux Passport* deals with the same problem of the purges. The sublime self-sacrifice of Igor, who is ready to face more than death, self-abasement, the besmirching of his revolutionary past, the admission of the most vile motives of his actions, with the knowledge of being executed in the cellars of the G.P.U. without anyone ever knowing that he was innocent, is that his name will go down into the history of his country as a traitor and a criminal. But the party is saved, for if the truth would be known, the party would suffer. The superhuman and heroic self-sacrifice, so difficult to understand for the western man, for whom personal honour means the most, is in parts not entirely convincing. With Koestler we follow the hero's mental process, he makes us share his moral disgust so totally, his conclusions, his guilt, that it becomes completely irrelevant that Rubasoff admits to crimes which he has not committed. We feel with him that he is guilty, not of the crimes to which he admits, but of others, as 'there is another measure besides that of reason, and did the righteous man perhaps carry the heaviest debt when weighed by this other measure? Was his debt perhaps counted double, for the others knew not what they did?' And when he admits to having wanted to assassinate No. 1, he does it not because he was guilty of it, but because he can't see 'why political murder was more dishonourable than political mass killing,' and civil war would have meant the latter. We are worked up to such a state of philosophical detachment when actual facts are of no importance. Points which a second ago seemed essential suddenly fade into nothingness. Rubasoff, the essentially ethical man, wants to expiate, 'for one

only can be crucified in the name of one's belief.' When he has reached this state, Glatkin tells him frankly that the party demands from him to make himself the scapegoat, for reason shows that it is more effective to tell the people that the industrial failures are due to counter revolutionary sabotage rather than to the unsatisfactory state of the industries. 'Scapegoats have always been a valuable necessity—Jesus Christ, the Lamb, had taken on Himself all sin. For 2,000 years people have found this quite natural. Experience teaches us to use this method,' explains Glatkin. The masses have to get their Punch and Judy show with angels and devils, with over-statements and simplification. The false admittance to treachery and the vilest motives will be Rubasoff's last service to the party, for which Glatkin thanks him in calling him comrade, and in spite of everything Rubasoff can't help feeling honoured and thankful for this kind word. The game is finished. It was a strange and grim one, unusual to ordinary beings—this staged performance of actors who once entangled in the web of their lies, are forced to go on with it to the very last consequence, even on the very threshold of death—they stay constant to The Lie. The Lie has become the omnipotent master.

These Russian rebels end their lives very differently to those of the French Revolution. To those at least was given the narcotic of public execution, where in front of the scaffold, terror of death could be drowned in the admiration or even in the hate of the spectators. It was a supreme show in which the grammatical fiction 'I' reaches its apotheosis. Few are those who don't pass the test, but it is hard to die alone, shot like a dog in a cellar. The men before the guillotine died with a phrase on their lips, to arouse approval or state their conviction for historical rehabilitation—a final satisfaction to their vanity. The super vanity of Danton made him say to his executioner: 'Montre ma tête au peuple; elle en vaut la peine.' Rubasoff remembers by heart Danton's words before the Tribunale Révolutionnaire, but rejects the temptation to use them. It would harm the party, the state, if he, the devil of the Punch and Judy show should be regarded as a hero. He has to die guilty. And for what? 'For the preservation of the bastion, the bastion which has no longer any message to give, nor an example for the world.' It is like a building which the blast has blown out; only the shell remains, an edifice without a

soul, which one day will have to be torn down and another built instead on real human values.

For most of us all this seems very remote and incomprehensible. We would like to throw it off as 'purely Russian,' the twisted pathological problems of diseased brains. But Koestler's book is much more than Russian or Communist. It is the eternal conflict of thesis and antithesis. Aristotle versus Plato, which, simplified, comes down to the following: What has to come first; the change of the individual who will then adopt the better institutions to his better and higher ideals, or the change of the institutions so that the individual who could not change otherwise should develop? For how can we change man, if the conditions under which he lives, have made him what he is? Can one build up a new world with old people? Can one hope to breed new people in a rotten world? It seems to be a vicious circle, for the means employed are such that no man using them can escape from deterioration in human value. Can one build anything worth while on such a humanity? And what goal can one achieve? What end? Is there any end? Isn't any end a new beginning? A beginning which we can't see, an end which is no end and which will always carry the stamp of the means we have used, and which therefore is our greatest responsibility. From all times people have used bad means to obtain good ends, or rather ends they thought good. We even do it to-day, when we accept mass murder and violence to resist a much greater evil—the permanent violence of fascism. The principle of preventive wars. Wars to make the world safe for democracy. Dreyfus was declared a traitor by the entire French clerical world, in spite of the fact that all knew that he was innocent. The aim was the crushing and compromising of the Left in France, of the Freemasonry and of the Jews. Justice and Truth seemed to be for those Catholic reactionaries irrelevant; if it harmed their cause it had to be suppressed. They jeered at those who were scrupulous, as harmful idealists. Ivanoff versus Rubasoff. The ruling classes have on various occasions suppressed truth and turned to violence to obtain their ends. It is not for them to be shocked; not for those who sacrificed the lives of millions for military conquests, or in coal and minefields, and let children die of tuberculosis and under nourishment. Why should they think this less unjust than the injustice and violence of revolutions? Is suffering only objected to when it is endured

under the pretext of a happier future? But what guarantee have we that the future—this future which has emerged out of the lowest standard of human awareness, out of misled and misused mankind, should be anything better? Religions, the recognition of absolute ethical values have been used as adequate brakes on violence, on brute force, on the lies and the calumnies which all authority is tempted to use. Christianity, although incompatible with capitalism, did create a compromise, an ethical ballast, which although hypocritical at times, recognized and paid tribute to kindness, love, truth and justice. ‘Hypocrisy is the tribute vice renders to virtue.’ Love endeavours to counterbalance hate, and the priest preaches love from the pulpits, gives consolation to the condemned at the foot of the scaffold, and to the soldier on the battlefield. Communists and Fascists, perhaps more logical, apply hate and violence in a totalitarian way. The balance is overthrown, the brakes give, and mankind runs amuck towards destruction. For we cannot turn vice into virtue without having the vital centres from which human evolution grows damaged. Moral balance is essential to preserve us from disintegration. As long as we preserve in them the faith of absolute good, faith in love, truth and justice, there is still hope for progress. Over-simplification does not necessarily mean clear-sightedness, and the allegation that there is no difference between the methods of democracies and those of totalitarian states, can mislead only the simple-minded who disregard the importance of measure and degree and are ignorant of the art of differentiation. To follow a thought to its last conclusion can be a pleasure, but it is not life. Life is complex and paradoxical; its pattern is composed by varying hues, lights and shades, and no rigid dogma can deviate its rhythm of ebb and flow from the harmony of its inner law.

## SELECTED NOTICES

*The Poetry of W. B. Yeats.* By Louis MacNeice. Oxford, 8s. 6d.  
 ‘In dreams begins responsibility.’ Such in four words is the history of Yeats as a poet. From the irresponsible private dream, to the dream in which the poet assumes the responsibility of his world, Yeats completed the poetic metamorphosis as a few only complete

it. As a young man, he came to London to join in the Nineties 'under the banner of the Solitary Spirit,' 'more Pre-Raphaelite than the Pre-Raphaelites,' and adhering to Pater's version of the *Æsthetic* gospel that 'Art never expresses anything but itself' ('As for living, our servants will do that for us' was de l'Isle Adam's corollary to this aphorism of Oscar Wilde).

The nineties were the hey-day of dreams, their irresponsibility still unchallenged by the Psycho-Analysts. Such dreams were the territory of a school of poets—priests without a congregation Mr. MacNeice calls them—who chose to say 'I banish you' to an indifferent world, but who wished to remain a perfect aristocracy. Mr. MacNeice, who has an excellent ear for such things, points out that 'there was something heiratic about the Alexandrine of the Nineties.' This distinguished and heiratic quality at least Yeats retained long after he had said farewell to the 'plumed but skinny shee.'

Later his dreams became responsible, the conventional poetic field came to include what the realists choose to call their world. But it was rather by a development of the dream than a rejection of dreams that this took place. 'We should ascend out of common interests, the thought of the newspapers, of the market-place, of men of science, but only so far as we can carry . . . the personality as a whole.' Thus it came that Yeats in his later years was occupied in preparing ballads and broadsheets that he hoped to have sung all over Ireland, and could wonder 'Did that play of mine send out certain men the English shot?' Thus came he to write:

'For nothing can be sole or whole  
That has not been born'

—the *Æsthetes* answered once for all.

Yeats, as a playwright not very successful, shared with the writers of peotic drama a basic conception of Life as a Dream. 'Having come to admire men of action, he rationalized his admiration by a theory that the man of action is a dreamer—who dramatizes his dream in action.' In this he may be compared with Calderon for whom 'even dreams are only dreams,' and with Shakespeare for whom 'we are such stuff as dreams.' There is something platonic about Yeats's Byzantium—'a world where blue is always blue, unlike the physical world where a blue object

changes with every change in the light.' Writing of his first impressions of *The Tower* Mr. MacNeice says 'I found it frigid, unsympathetic . . . too mannered. Like a figure from a fancy-dress party he looked wrong by day-light.' Later realizing that 'the daylight of "realism", is itself largely a fiction,' Mr. MacNeice felt differently towards this real or fictitious eternity which Yeats made his world.

Later, without rejecting the dream, Yeats came to write of the dreamer—the fool, the old man, the beggar, *Crazy Jane*: characters like those of his friend John Synge, important not of themselves, but because of the dreamer of poetry, it can be said that

'Like a long-legged fly upon the stream,  
His mind moves upon silence.'

Many schools in the long course of his poetry have claimed Yeats. (Symons claimed him for the Impressionists.) Morris wrote: 'You write any kind of poetry'. Auden and the 'realists' have said the same, and Mr. MacNeice is anxious to give his friends all he honestly can—'Like Yeats, they opposed to the contemporary chaos, a code of values, a belief in system, . . . a belief in life.' (A very different code of values, and a very different system, but the wish to stand with Yeats is stronger than the differences!) Yeats himself tried to found an Irish school round himself, and in this country would gladly have lent himself to a movement represented by Lady Gerald Wellesley and Mr. W. J. Turner, had such existed. But Mr. MacNeice, after careful examination of all claims, places the distinguished and lonely Yeats with two other distinguished and lonely poets, who never claimed him, nor he them—Eliot and Lawrence. 'We might say of Yeats that he approximates to Lawrence in so far as he is eclectic, and to Eliot in so far as he is authoritarian.' One might say that eclecticism is common to all three, and that Eliot's authoritarianism is itself eclectic. But it is in style that the resemblance merges, and it is precisely in the comparison of style that Mr. MacNeice excels as a critic.

Mr. MacNeice disclaims any interest in 'ranking poets' or in 'great poetry as such', but few will differ from his conclusion that 'Yeats's limitations may have prevented him writing the greatest kind of poetry, but they enabled him to write perhaps the best poetry of his time.'

'It must be admitted that there was a certain snobbery in our new admiration, a snobbery paralleled in Yeats's own remark "I too have tried to be modern".' Mr. MacNeice here speaks for his own generation, and might be understood to imply that in his later works Yeats managed to catch up with his juniors after a badly handicapped start. But there is no question of Yeats ending where Auden begins, or Auden beginning where Yeats ends. Later Yeats is 'The final results of mastery' of which Roger Fry said truly enough that it 'cannot be achieved without going through the preliminary stages.' Yeats wrote laboriously, seeking to convince his compatriots that to write without reflection is not 'a Celtic privilege.' Far less would he have agreed with Auden's view that all material that can be popped with a linguistic Leica is poetic. He expanded from the poetic centre, whereas Auden storms the circumference.

Mr. MacNeice, himself a poet, has a start of most critics in knowing what a poem is. This sixth sense gives him an authority greater than argument. No poet, I believe, would in essence disagree with what he writes about the nature of poems. 'A poem is a thing in itself,' 'a self-contained organism, a physical organism, a separate self'. This places him at the outset near to Yeats, and his subsequent examination of the verbal texture of Yeats's poems is vital, and unerring. By a series of excellent comparisons, he reveals his early debts to Morris, Keats, Tennyson; his debts to Ireland; his later affinities with Eliot and Lawrence; and the growth of his own personal style. Mr. MacNeice shows how and with what in mind he altered passages in his early poems in later years, and it is unlikely that any analysis could more nearly pursue the actual process through which Yeats passed. Mr. MacNeice's approach is that of a poet, but an expert and scholarly poet—and this is certainly the most fruitful approach to Yeats for whom 'words alone are certain good.'

I hope I have sufficiently indicated the excellence of this book to venture on some criticisms. Mr. MacNeice is too much on the defensive. On page 1 he writes: 'Poetry nowadays appears to need defending.' This is a curious opening for a book on the one poet who has been acclaimed—even too much acclaimed for his Apostolic successors—and one feels that it is less Yeats than himself that Mr. MacNeice wishes to defend. He goes on to introduce the extraneous question of Rupert Brooke's attitude to war, and

his own feeling that this war made Yeats and his poetry seem unreal. 'The unreality which now overtook them was also overtaking in my mind modern London, modernist art, and Left Wing politics . . . I gradually inferred, as I recovered from the shock of war, that both these kinds of poetry stand or fall together.' So they do, if war is viewed as death, but a revision of evaluation may well be made necessary by war viewed as a change in the conditions of living. It may be that some of the pre-war values *were* unreal and *will* have to be discarded, but as Mr. MacNeice concludes of Rupert Brooke, that he made premature decisions on war and poetry in 1914, so we hope that Mr. MacNeice will not repeat his error, in 1941.

A more serious weakness is Mr. MacNeice's failure to attack directly the problem of the relation of Yeats's systems and beliefs to his poetry. He skirmishes with the Marxists, coquettes with the mystics, but finally tries to get out of it: 'His doctrine of poetry may have been unsound, but it does not compare too badly with the doctrines of his contemporaries.' The Symbolists, Imagists, A. E. Housman, Surrealists, Eliot, Riding, Auden, the Communists. Elsewhere he slips over the difference in system between Yeats and the 'realists,' saying that the common element is hewing a system. The system inherent in poetry can no more be transplanted out of poetry than can Buddhism, Christianity or Marxism be transplanted into it. But can it from this be argued that systems to poets are mere scaffolding? That Yeats treated his 'blue print for reality' as such might be deduced from the authority he, as poet, assumed over his 'spirits.' When they, during séances, dictated bad poetry, he switched them off. The poetry was the test, and Yeats himself the authority. Is there really (as one poet to another might ask it) any essential difference in process between Yeats's invocations of spirits and incarnations, and Mr. Eliot's sterner, plainer, but not less liberating concept of 'Impersonality'? Yeats preferred ever the picturesque word. Yet both seek to rationalize an experience familiar to all poets, of drawing on a source, so far without, or so deep within, as to be beyond the accepted limits of the self. Freud's 'Unconscious' might serve another poet to describe the same thing. I do not feel that Mr. MacNeice has dealt quite adequately with this question of Yeats's beliefs in relation to his poetry. Did he believe or did he not, does it matter or does it not, do the beliefs of poets

matter or do they not? To say that we all have beliefs of some sort anyway, is to sit on the fence, both of poetry and of ethics. Mr. MacNeice understands the nature of poetry so well, that one wishes that he had gone one better and faced this important issue. Perhaps, however, it only exists for poets at the moment when their poetry solves it—precisely at that point at which neither poetry nor system is in need of defending. One cause at least Mr. MacNeice defends well—that of scholarly criticism in the field of living poetry.

K. J. RAINÉ

*Frederick the Great*, by Pierre Gaxotte, translated by R. A. Bell (G. Bell & Sons, 1955.).

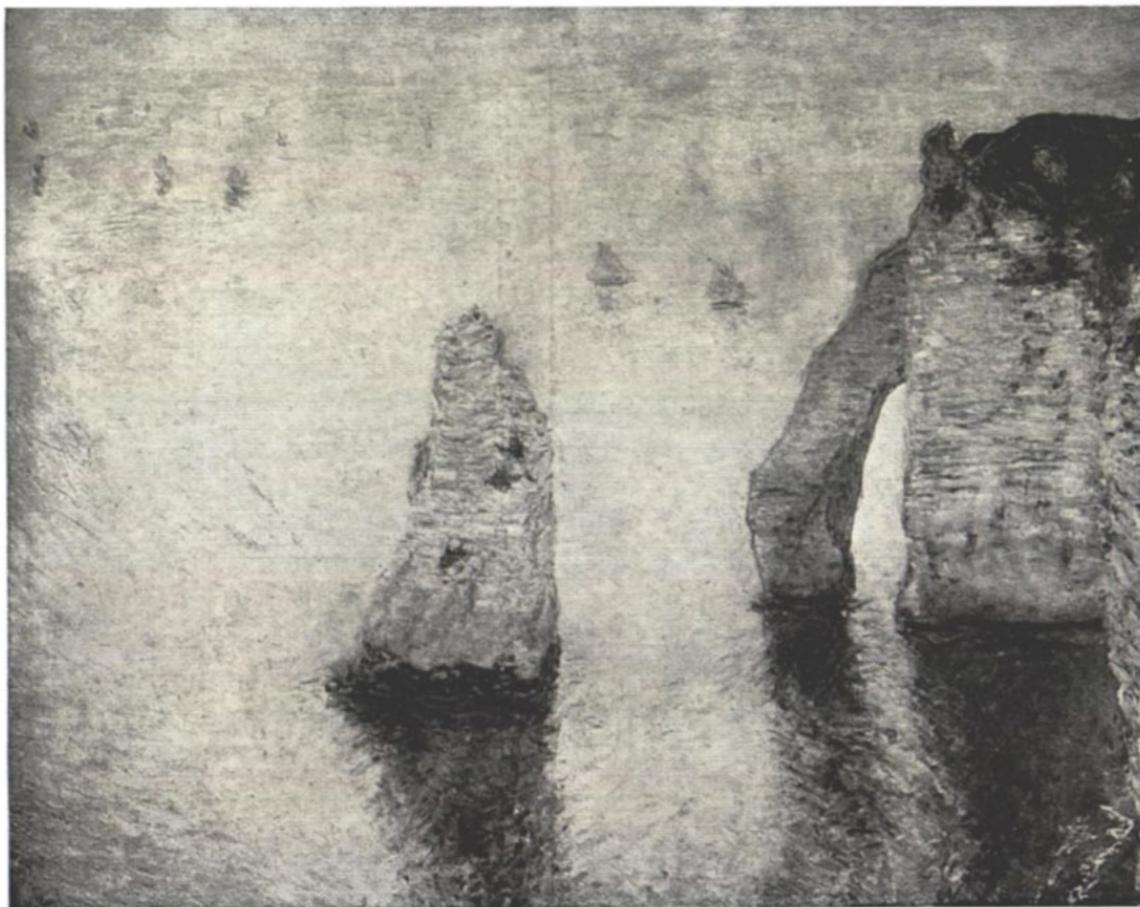
How remote they sometimes seem, those Enlightened Despots of the eighteenth century: disciples of the Physiocrats, patrons of the Encyclopædistes, the German epigoni of Louis XIV, basking in an artificial afterglow of the splendours of Versailles! And yet their modernity is sometimes grimly apparent. They rejected the restraints of tradition and the sanctity of treaties; they despised their subjects and made their yoke effective; and they partitioned Poland. In the end, the very success of their Realpolitik was their undoing. The disorderly Machiavellianism of the 1780's was too hectic to last; and in the avalanche which followed, Europe, losing its kings, was forced to rediscover some common standards of international behaviour.

Of this dichotomy Frederick the Great is a fascinating example, in which the characteristics of the age were heightened by a personal case-history. In consequence, he is a hazardous subject for a biographer. That Mr. Gaxotte should avoid the cruder misrepresentations of the panegyrists and the scandalographers is, of course, to be expected; but there are other hazards, less blatant than these. How easy, and how tempting, but how fatal, for a writer in 1941 (like Mr. Gaxotte) to dwell upon the contemporary relevancies, which are so obvious; how natural, and how pardonable, but also how fatal, for an erudite scholar (like Mr. Gaxotte) to lose his reader's way in the barren intricacies of eighteenth century diplomacy. Mr. Gaxotte has, however, avoided both pitfalls. He has left modern inferences to the reader, and dead politics out of the book; and he has described, with skill, the history of a warped personality and a successful reign.

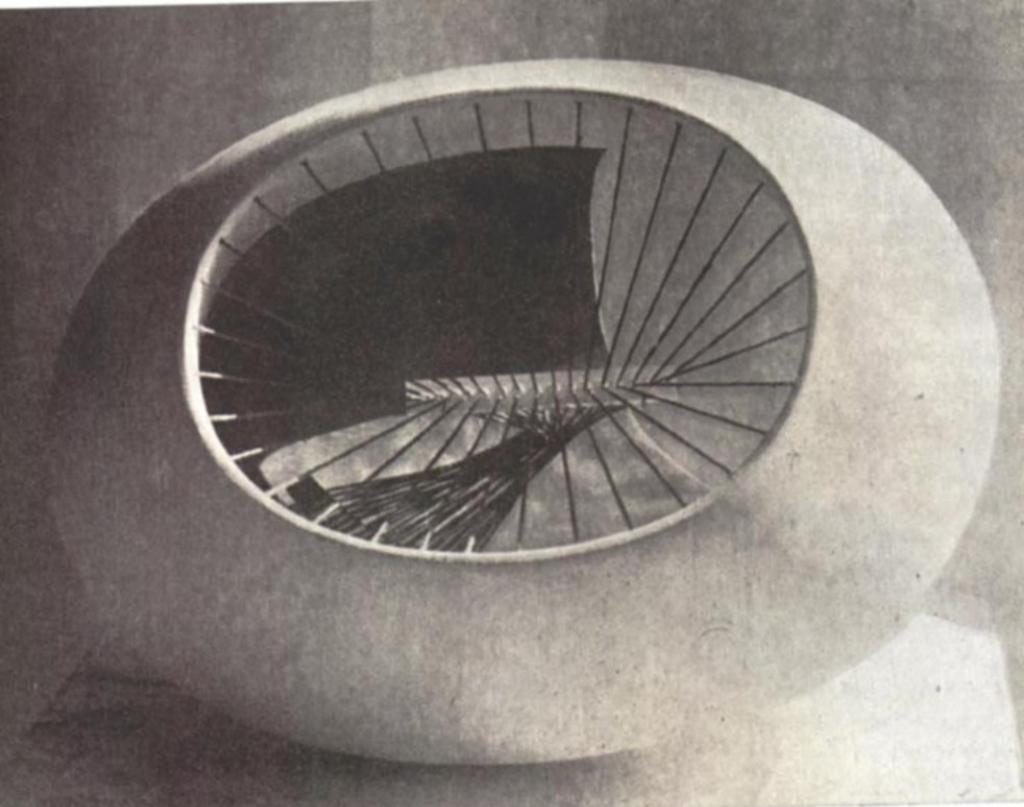
The character of Frederick is interesting, but not attractive. The fastidious, dilettante Prince, brutally treated by an unsympathetic father, survived his humiliations only by developing a callous duplicity and assuming a serious mission; and when his father's death set him free, he ascended the throne of Prussia a cynical egotist, a frustrated intellectual, and a ruthless and efficient despot.

These interwoven, and often conflicting characteristics are illustrated throughout Mr. Gaxotte's book. The author is more concerned with the personality than the historical significance of his subject; and most readers will be glad to find the strategy of Frederick's wars treated in less detail than the life at Rheinsberg and Sans Souci. We are shown impartially the philosopher discussing with Voltaire the engaging topic of Plato's androgynes; the soldier sneering at his own collection of literati; and the restless administrator whose demands of his subordinates caused an English envoy to observe, 'I would rather be a monkey in Borneo than a minister in Prussia'. But perhaps the most fascinating aspect of that complex character is what psychologists term the ambivalence of Frederick's attitude towards the intellectuals, whom he first courted with fashionable adulation, and then treated as Court-fools. His relations with Voltaire are famous; but the others fared no better; and the vanity of philosophers and the vanity of German princes being about equal, the results were nearly always disastrous. Frederick's mind seems really never to have developed beyond the adolescent stage at which it suffered its great crisis—his intellectual judgments remained always immature; but although he devoted his riper faculties to a historic task, which he superimposed upon his early inclinations, the suppressed intellectual hankerings would still return to torment him with the memory of those miserable years. Frederick indulged these mutilated instincts; but for their mutilation he took his revenge on the less unfortunate philosophers of Sans Souci.

Of course there were other reasons too for the alliance between Frederick and the philosophers. While Louis XIV reigned at the luminous centre of civilization, those who, in the next generation, claimed to carry on the traditions of Versailles, were conscious of their cultural isolation. They were exiles in barbarian lands beyond the Rhine; and the friendship of Voltaire, of D'Alembert, and of Diderot was necessary to Frederick and Catherine if they were to



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respect themselves, and despise and reform their subjects. Besides, the Encyclopædists were first-rate propagandists. There is a modern ring in Voltaire's eulogy of Frederick's new order after the Peace of Breslau. Even the Partition of Poland was represented as a victory of liberty of conscience over 'christed superstition'—for, as Mr. Gaxotte asks, 'who could take up the cause of such pious Catholics as the Poles in the century of the Encyclopædia?' It does us no harm to be reminded that the Enlightenment was not on the side of Self-Determination.

H. R. TREVOR-ROPER

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